

NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

Read and Find out (Page 20)

Q1. What does Horace Danby like to collect?

Ans. Horace loved rare and expensive books. He needed money to buy them. He loved books so much that he robbed a safe every year. The money he robbed would last one year. He secretly bought the books through an agent.

Q2. Why does he steal every year?

Ans. Horace Danby made locks. He had employed two helpers to assist him. He was successful enough at his business. He was good and respectable but not honest. So he robbed a safe every year. The money lasted for twelve months. He had a passion for books. With that money, he secretly bought the books he loved through an agent.

Read and Find out (Page 22)

Q1. Who is speaking to Horace Danby?

Ans. A young, pretty lady dressed in red, is speaking to Horace Danby. She is also a thief and a burglar like him.

Q2. Who is the real culprit in the story?

Ans. The real culprit in the story is the young and pretty lady in red. She presents herself as if she were the lady of the house. Actually, she is a burglar like Horace Danby. She makes him open the safe and hand the jewels over to her. Danby comes to know of her true identity only in the end.

Think About It (Page 25)

Q1. Did you begin to suspect, before the end of the story, that the lady was not the person Horace Danby took her to

be? If so, at what point did you realise this, and how?

Ans. Nowhere did we begin to suspect that the young lady was not the person Horace Danby took her to be. She appeared in such a natural way advising him how to cure hay fever that he couldn't doubt her. She spoke in a kindly but in a firm voice. She was pretty and well dressed. Even the dog was rubbing against her in a friendly manner. She presented herself as if she were the lady of the house. When Horace told her that his first thought was to run away, she threatened to telephone the police and tell them all about him. At no point could Horace doubt her real intention. She made him open the safe and give her the jewels.

Only two days later, when Horace was arrested by the police, we came to realise that Horace was outwitted by a thief like him. The gray-haired woman of sixty, who was the lady of the house told the police that the story told by Horace in his defence was nonsense.

Q2. What are the subtle ways in which the lady manages to deceive Horace Danby into thinking she is the lady of the house? Why doesn't Horace suspect that something is wrong?

Ans. Truly, Horace Danby was outwitted and deceived by the young lady in red. All her gestures, movements and behaviour made Horace realise that she was the lady of the house. She caught him unaware. She told him how to treat the hay fever he was suffering from. Even the dog was rubbing against her in a friendly manner. She threatened Horace to telephone the police and tell them all if he tried to run away. In a very subtle way, she told Horace that she wanted to wear the jewels in the safe to a party that night. And that she had forgotten the number of the lock. Everything was said so naturally and convincingly. There was no reason for Horace to doubt that she was also a burglar like him. She made him open the safe without gloves. Horace gave her the jewels and went away happily. Her composed and

convincing manner betrayed Horace to take her to be the lady of the house.

Q3. "Horace Danby was good and respectable—but not completely honest." Why do you think this description is apt for Horace? Why can't he be categorised as a typical thief?

Ans. No doubt, Horace Danby was a good and respectable man. However, he couldn't be called honest. Everyone thought so. He was fifty years old and unmarried. He lived with a housekeeper who worried over his health. He was well and happy. Only sometimes, he had attacks of hay fever in summer. He made locks and was quite successful in his business. But Horace Danby was not honest. He robbed a safe every year. He stole enough money to last twelve months.

Horace Danby was a thief but couldn't be categorised as a typical thief. He committed theft for a cause. He loved rare and expensive books. The money he got from robbing a safe once a year was spent on buying books. He secretly bought the books he loved through an agent. He would rob only the rich person. He never hurt anyone and carried no weapon with him. He was not very aggressive and didn't want to go to prison. So, Horace couldn't be categorised as a typical thief.

Q4. Horace Danby was a meticulous planner but still he faltered. Where did he go wrong and why?

Ans. Definitely, Horace Danby was a meticulous planner. He was not an ordinary thief. He robbed a safe every year. He didn't rob people for bread and butter. He made locks and was successful in it. With the money he robbed, he bought rare and costly books. He planned every robbery quite meticulously. For his new robbery, he had been studying the location of the house at Shotover Grange. In the magazine, he had read the situation of rooms, electric wires, paths and its gardens. He had seen the place where the housekeeper hung the key. He

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had even known the name of the dog and how to be friendly with it.

Even such a meticulous planner faltered. He didn't know the lady of the house. Nor had he ever seen her. So the smart and young lady in red could easily deceive him. With her convincing gestures and manners, she was able to convince Horace that she was the lady of the house. The other great mistake that he made was that he opened the safe without his gloves. He left his fingerprints and this lapse led him to prison.

talk About it (Page 25)

Q1. Do you think Horace Danby was unfairly punished, or that he deserved what he got?

Ans. It is rather difficult to assess whether Horace Danby was unfairly punished or that he deserved what he got. No doubt, he entered the house with the intention of burgling the house. He had made elaborate plans to commit that theft. And theft is after all theft and must be punished. But things don't end here. What is more important to consider is the fact whether he went away with anything from the house or not. In the end, he helped the young lady in the red and handed over all the jewels to her. He happily left the house without taking anything from there. Doing so,

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SOLVED

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Who was Horace Danby?

Ans. Horace Danby was about fifty years old and unmarried. Everyone thought that he was a good and honest citizen. He lived with a housekeeper who worried about his health. He suffered from the attacks of hay fever in summer. He made locks and was successful at his business. But he was not completely honest. He robbed a safe once a year to buy rare and costly books.

Q2. Why was Horace Danby not completely honest?

Ans. Generally, people thought that Horace Danby was a good, honest and respectable

his intention was genuine and honest. He opened the safe genuinely thinking that the lady in the red was the lady of the house. He opened the safe without his gloves which reflected only his honest intention. Hence, his punishment was quite unfortunate and unfair.

Q2. Do intentions justify actions? Would you, like Horace Danby, do something wrong if you thought your ends justified the means? Do you think that there are situations in which it is excusable to act less than honestly?

Ans. Certainly, intentions justify actions. Sometimes, it happens that a wrong is committed while the intention was honest and fair. In such cases, the courts of justice do count the intentions of the doer. In this case, Horace's intention when he entered the house was to commit a theft. Hence, no court would condone his act. However, when he opened the safe without his gloves and handed over all the jewels to the young lady in red, his intention was honest and fair. And this can't be ignored and justice must be done accordingly. However, it is not excusable if one acts less than honestly. At least, Horace Danby should be punished because he made an illegal entry in the absence of the owner of the house.

Q3. What preparations did Horace make for 'this year's robbery' at Shotover Grange?

Ans. All the previous yearly robberies of Horace Danby were successful. He felt sure that this year's robbery at Shotover Grange would also be successful. He had been studying the location of the house for two weeks. He studied its

rooms, electric wiring, paths and garden. He found out that the two servants had gone to the movies. He had seen the housekeeper hang the key to the kitchen door on a hook outside.

Q4. How did Horace Danby enter the house?

Ans. Horace Danby had been preparing for the theft. He studied the house carefully for two weeks before committing the theft in the house at Shotover Grange. He studied its rooms, electric wiring, paths and its garden. He had seen the housekeeper hang the key to the kitchen door on a hook outside. He put on a pair of gloves, took the key and opened the door. Thus, he entered the house at Shotover Grange.

Q5. What precautions did Horace make before reaching the safe? Name three of them.

Ans. Horace Danby took the following precautions before committing the theft:

(i) He put on a pair of gloves as he was always careful not to leave any fingerprints.

(ii) To tackle the house-dog, Sherry, he kept him quiet and friendly by calling him by his right name.

(iii) He cut the wire of the burglar bell.

Q6. Why was it not hard to open the safe for Horace Danby?

Ans. It was not going to be hard to open the safe for Horace Danby. After all, he had 'lived with locks and safes all his life'. He made locks himself with two helpers. The burglar alarm was poorly built and he cut the wires of the burglar alarm. He knew about the safe and the key, and it was not a difficult job for him to open it when no one was present in the house.

Q7. Whose voice was it that advised Horace about the special treatment of his hay fever?

Ans. When Horace was about to open the safe, he heard a female voice. She asked if he suffered from cold or hay fever. He was sneezing again and again. She told that he could cure the hay fever with a special treatment. He must find out what plant gave him that disease. She also advised Horace to see a doctor.

Q8. Describe the unexpected meeting of the young lady in red and Horace.

Ans. When a voice advised Horace to find a suitable treatment of his hay fever, he was surprised. It was a quiet, kindly voice but one with firmness in it. A young woman, quite pretty and dressed in red was standing there. She walked to the fire place and straightened the ornaments. She said that she "didn't expect to meet a burglar".

Q9. Why did the woman in red threaten to telephone the police?

Ans. Horace was caught red-handed. The woman in red said that she didn't expect to meet a burglar there. She added that she knew that it had been a great inconvenience for him to meet her. She also asked what he was going to do. Horace replied that he was thinking of running away. The lady threatened that if he did so, she would telephone the police and tell them all about him. They would get him at once.

Q10. When and why did the woman in red say, "Society must be protected from men like you"? Doesn't it sound ironical?

Ans. Horace assured the woman in red that he would not hurt her. She must forget she ever met him. It made her angry. She couldn't let him go, otherwise he would rob someone else. Society must be protected from people like him. It sounds ironical because she herself was a thief and had come for the same purpose for which Horace was there in the house.

Q11. "I have always liked the wrong kind of people," said the woman in red. Comment.

Ans. It was ironical that the woman who was being considered as the lady of the house and talking big things, was herself a thief. Horace requested her to let him go. He was desperate and afraid of going to prison. He promised never to do such a thing again. The lady pretended to be generous and stated that she "always liked the wrong kind of people".

Q12. Why did Horace mistake the young lady in red as the lady of the house?

The young woman in red was even smarter than Horace Danby. She was a thief and came with the same purpose as Horace to that house. However, she encountered Horace with an air of confidence and authority. She didn't allow him to doubt or think about her. She showed that the dog, Sherry, belonged to her. He told him that she returned 'home' just in time. Her manner of speaking, gestures and confidence made Horace mistake her to be the lady of the house.

Q13. Do you think that the young woman in red proved far smarter than Horace Danby? Give reasons.

Ans. Definitely, the young woman in red proved far smarter than Horace Danby. She played her part of being the lady of the house with complete perfection. She was an example of self-confidence. She didn't show any hesitation. She spoke and acted with an air of complete confidence and authority. Poor Horace became a puppet who couldn't take himself out of her spell. She threatened to telephone the police and made him open the safe, while Horace was later on caught and arrested. She decamped with the jewels.

14. Who is the real culprit in the story, the young lady in red or Horace Danby? Comment.

Ans. Law of any land works on evidences. Horace Danby opened the safe without wearing his gloves. He didn't think it necessary to wear them as he thought he was working for 'the lady of the house'. So the police matched his fingerprints and he was arrested. The lady in the red was actually the real culprit. She made Horace open the safe for her. She was also a thief and decamped with the jewels. But in the eyes of the law, Horace was the real culprit because the evidence was against him.

Q15. Why didn't the dog bark when Horace Danby and the young lady in red entered to commit theft in the house?

Ans. Both, Horace Danby and the young lady in red knew all the tricks of their trade.

They knew the real nature of dogs and how to be friendly with them. A small dog when made a noise, Horace called out "All right, Sherry," as he passed. Perhaps, the lady in red also knew like Horace that to keep dogs quiet, one must call them by their right names. Their trick worked and Sherry remained quiet.

Q16. Why did Horace Danby prefer books to collecting paintings?

Ans. Horace Danby had a passion for books. Collecting and buying rare and expensive books was his passionate hobby. He resorted to rob a safe every year to buy them. When the preference between collecting books and paintings came, he chose the former. Paintings took up too much space. In a small house like his, books were a better choice.

Q17. Why didn't Horace Danby never get any chance to look for another safe?

Ans. Horace got nothing from the house at Shotover Grange. The lady in red decamped with the jewels. For two days, he kept his promise given to the kind, young lady in red. On the third day, he realised that he would have to look for another safe to buy books. But he never got that chance because the police arrested him for the jewel robbery at Shotover Grange.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. How did the lady in red turn out to be much smarter and cleverer than Horace Danby? How did one thief outwit and outmanoeuvre the other?

Or How did the lady in red manage to outsmart and outmanoeuvre the other thief, Horace Danby, by robbing the safe without leaving a single fingerprint?

Ans. The lady in red was also a thief. So was Horace Danby. But it was the lady in the red who outmanoeuvred and outwitted Horace. No doubt, Horace did his job quite professionally. He worked hard to find out the necessary details about the location of the house and the position of the key and the safe. But, Horace proved to be a novice in judging the young lady in red. The young lady acted with so much

confidence and in such a convincing manner that she could easily pass off as the lady of the house. Horace Danby became a mere puppet who danced to the tune of the lady. When caught red-handed, he pleaded her to let him go. The young lady exploited his confusion and fear of going to prison fully. She made Horace open the safe. The unsuspecting Horace was made to believe that he was working for the lady of the house. So he opened the safe without putting on his gloves. He gave the jewels to the lady leaving his fingerprints on the safe. So he was found out and arrested. Naturally, the young lady in red proved far smarter and outmanoeuvred Horace Danby.

Q2. Give a character-sketch of Horace Danby in your own words. How was he outmanoeuvred by the lady in red?

Ans. Horace Danby was about fifty years old and unmarried. Everyone thought him a good and honest citizen. He was otherwise very well and happy except for attacks of hay fever in summer. He made locks and was fairly successful at his business. Horace Danby was good and respectable – but not completely honest. He used to rob a safe every year. He did so because he needed money to buy books. Horace had a passion for buying rare and costly books. With that money, he secretly bought the books he loved through an agent.

Like a professional thief, he made a lot of preparations. He made it sure that every year's robbery was going to be as successful as all the others. He studied the location of the house at Shotover Grange—its rooms, its electric wiring, its paths and its gardens in details. He also came to know that the two servants of the house were out to the movies. He also knew where was the safe and its key. He befriended the little dog by calling his right name.

In spite of all his professionalism, Horace Danby proved a novice in judging the lady in red. The lady in red behaved with so much confidence and authority that Horace became totally a puppet in

her hands. Easily passing off as the lady of the house, she made Horace open the safe without wearing his gloves. While the lady in red decamped with the jewels, Horace was sent to prison.

Q3. Give a character-sketch of the lady in red highlighting how she outwitted Horace Danby.

Ans. We don't get any information regarding the past history of the lady in red as we know about Horace's past. Her whole personality remains wrapped in mystery till the end. Only when the identity of the real lady of the house is unfolded, we come to know that she is a thief. She is the real culprit. The lady in red comes there with the only purpose of committing a theft in the house like Horace. She cleverly decamps with the jewels while Horace is sent to prison. The lady in red is gifted with a rare personality. She is full of confidence. She acts like a perfect actress presenting herself as the lady of the house. Her gestures, confidence and convincing power are enough to convince Horace. He turns out quite a novice in understanding and judging the lady in red and her motive. She dominates the proceeding. Horace only proves a puppet in her hands. She exploits his fear of going to prison. She makes him open the safe without his gloves. She convinced him that she needed those jewels to wear them to a party that night. Horace willingly hands over the jewels and she decamps with them. Only when the grey-haired, sharp-tongued woman appears as the real lady of the house, we come to know that the lady in red was a professional and crafty thief much smarter than Horace.

Q4. How had Horace planned to loot the house at Shotover Grange?

Ans. Horace Danby never committed a theft in hurry. All his previous operations were completely successful. He robbed a safe every year. This money was enough to last for a year. Like all his previous robberies, he also planned his latest robbery in a house at Shotover Grange in all details. For two weeks, he had been

studying the house, its rooms, electric wiring, paths and its garden. He also had a definite information that two servants working there had gone to movies. He saw them go. He came out from behind the garden wall. He had packed his tools carefully in a bag on his back. He had seen the housekeeper hang the key to the kitchen door on a hook outside. He put on a pair of gloves, took the key and opened the house. He always put on a pair of gloves before committing a theft. A magazine article had described the house with all the rooms. It also mentioned that a painting hid a safe. He collected all these details and made all preparations to make his latest theft a complete success like the others.

Q5. How was Horace Danby arrested for the robbery of the jewels in a house at Shotover Grange? Do you think his own foolishness was responsible for his arrest? Give a reasoned answer.

Ans. Horace Danby never acted recklessly in a hurry while committing a theft. He robbed a safe every year. All his previous thefts had been completely successful.

Even to commit a theft in a house at Shotover Grange, he made detailed and fool-proof preparations. However, he proved a novice in comparison to the young lady in red. She, in a very confident and convincing way, made him believe that she was the lady of the house. She made him open the safe without the gloves and handover all the jewels to her. She decamped with the jewels and Horace was arrested.

By noon, a policeman arrested Horace for the jewel robbery at Shotover Grange. He had opened the safe without wearing his gloves. He did so believing that he was opening the safe for the lady of the house. He pleaded that the wife of the owner of the house had asked him to open the safe for her. The real lady of the house appeared on the scene. She was not the young lady in red but a gray-haired woman of sixty. She said that Horace's story was nonsense. Only then, Horace came to know that he was outwitted by the lady in red who was also a thief like him.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Why was Horace Danby not completely honest?
2. Why did Horace Danby rob a safe every year?
3. What detailed preparations did Horace make to rob a house at Shotover Grange?
4. How did Horace and the lady in red befriend with the little dog at Shotover Grange?
5. Describe the first encounter of Horace with the lady of the house.
6. Why did the young lady in red threaten to telephone the police?
7. Why did the young lady say that society must be protected from men like Horace Danby?
8. On what condition did the young lady in red allow Horace to go?
9. How did Horace open the safe? Why was it not a difficult job for him?
10. What was the greatest lapse on Horace Danby's part that led to his arrest?
11. How was Horace Danby arrested?
12. Who was the gray-haired woman and why did she say that Horace's story was a nonsense?
13. When and how was the young lady in red exposed?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1. How did the lady in red make Horace act like her puppet and open the safe for her?
2. Write a character-sketch of Horace Danby highlighting the greatest lapse on his part.