



মণিপুরৰ শাসন বিভাগ (মণি)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (S)

Government of Manipur

CLASS X
ENGLISH LITERATURE READER
CHAPTER 5 - ON SAYING 'PLEASE'
(A.G. GARDINER)

SOLUTION

A. Based on your reading of the text, complete the following statements:

- i) The liftman who threw the passenger out was in the wrong because discourtesy is not a legal offence.
- ii) Law may not recognize discourtesy as a legal offence, but it does not mean that the law does not excuse assault and battery.
- iii) In the eye of the law, the liftman may be wrong, yet most people did not like the behaviour, or the tone of their voices, or the scowl on the faces.
- iv) “Thank you” and ‘please’ make social relationship mutually co-operative and easy instead of on the basis of superiors dictating to inferiors.
- v) The writer is thankful to the “Underground Railway Company” for insisting on a certain standard of civility in its servants and taking care that standard is observed.
- vi) The polite conductor got a heavy boot because his own feet get trod on so much and now he is treading on other people.
- vii) If bad manner are infectious, so also are good manners.
- viii) The polite conductor’s civility and good-humored bearing infected his passengers.

B. Answer the following questions in a sentence each:

(i) Does law recognise bad manner as a legally punishable offence?

Ans: No, law does not recognise bad manner as a legally punishable offence.

(ii) According to the writer, are damages done to one’s self-respect negligible?

Ans: No, it is not negligible.

(iii) According to the writer, what poisons general life in society more than all the crimes in the calendar?

Ans: Bad manner poisons general life in society more than all the crimes.



(iv) What, according to Gardiner, is the first requirement of civility?

Ans: According to Gardiner, saying please is the first requirement of civility.

(v) What kind of mind will wish to command where one can have the service more willingly only on asking?

Ans: A vulgar mind will wish to command where one can have the service more willingly only on asking.

(vi) What is the writer's general opinion about conductors as a class?

Ans: The writer's general opinion about conductors as a class was that they do a very trying job with great patience.

(vii) The conductor gave a ticket to the writer although he had no money. Where did the conductor say he should pay the money?

Ans: The conductor said the writer could pay it when they meet the next time.

(viii) Why did the writer feel a curious pleasure whenever he travelled in the bus of the polite bus conductor?

Ans: The writer felt a curious pleasure whenever he travelled in the bus of the polite bus conductor because of his constant good-bearing. He was a very patient person. He made all his passengers happy.

(ix) According to the writer, what is responsible for the loss of the little everyday civilities of behaviour that sweetens the general air?

Ans: The writer says that the world war is responsible for the loss of civilities among the young people. People had seen extreme cruelty during the war. As a result of it men and women have lost gentleness and civil behaviour that sweetens the general air.



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C. Answer each of the following questions briefly:

(i) Why did the liftman push out the passenger?

Ans: The passenger was rude to the liftman. He refused to say 'Top please' instead of 'Top' to the liftman. The liftman's self-respect was hurt. He felt as if he was being looked down. He lost his cool and pushed the passenger out of the lift.

(ii) What legal right does a man have if a burglar breaks into his house?

Ans: If a burglar breaks into a man's house he has the legal right to knock the burglar down. It is so because breaking into someone's house is recognised by the law as a legal offense.

(iii) The law found the liftman wrong. Why does the author say that the law was reasonable? How?

Ans: The author says that law was right in finding the liftman legally wrong. It was because discourtesy is not a legal offence and cannot excuse physical assault in retaliation.

(iv) Why does law not compel a man to say 'please'?

Ans: Law does not compel a man to say 'please' because it cannot administer the vast area of offences that would come under 'discourtesy'. If discourtesy is a legal offence then there will be no end to our fighting.

(v) "The pain of a kick on the shins soon passes away but the pain of a wound to our self-respect or our vanity may poison a whole day". Explain.

Ans: If someone kicks at our shins, the physical pain will pass away. Moreover, one can get redress for physical pain. But a wound to one's self-respect or vanity would linger like poison for a long time. It is so because there is no legal redress.

(vi) According to the author, what might the liftman have done if he was denied the relief of throwing the uncivil passenger out of the lift?

Ans: The author thinks if the liftman had not thrown the passenger out of the lift, he would feel hurt throughout the day. Finally, reaching home in the evening he would have been rude to his wife as a kind of revenge on the passenger.



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(vii) “Bad manners probably do more to poison the stream of general life than all the crimes in the calendar”. Explain.

Ans: Bad manners are widespread. Many husbands are not violent, but are rude to their wives. This makes the life of many wives miserable. We may think crimes like murder poison our life throughout the year. But, actually, bad manners are so widespread that they poison the lives of many more.

(viii) The writer says that most people will have certain sympathy with the liftman. Why does he say so in spite of saying that he was legally wrong?

Ans: No doubt, the liftman was legally wrong for throwing the passenger out. But many people will have sympathy for him. It was because he broke a social practice which says we should be polite to our fellow beings. This practice is more sacred than laws.

(ix) “Please” and “Thank you” are the small change with which we pay our way as social being. Why does the writer say so?

Ans: Small changes may not be a big deal or require huge amount of money. But in day-to-day business of buying and selling, we cannot do without them. Similarly, ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ may be small courtesies. But without them social intercourse cannot be carried on.

(x) Why does the writer say that the bus conductor’s job is a trying job?

Ans: ‘Trying job’ means a job which a man finds difficult in performing. The writer calls the bus conductor’s job a trying job because it is not easy to collect bus fare in a bus full of passengers.

(xi) Under what circumstances did the author meet the polite conductor?

Ans: One day, while travelling in a bus the writer found that he had not got any money with him. But the bus conductor gave the writer a ticket and told him to give the money next time they meet.



(xii) How did the author expect to be treated at the hand of the polite conductor when he found that he had no money?

Ans: When the author found that he had no money with him to pay the bus fare. He became nervous because he expected that the conductor might treat him rudely or he might be considered a fool or even a scoundrel.

(xiii) The conductor's boot had the author. Yet he assured him that he had not. Why did he do so?

Ans: The conductor was so polite and nice about it thus the author assured him that he had not hurt him.

(xiv) How did the conductor treat blind men aboard his bus?

Ans: If the conductor had a blind man on board it was not enough for the polite conductor to set the blind man down safely on the pavement. He would ask the driver to wait while he took the blind-man across the road or round the corner or until he was safely on his way.

(xv) The author missed the polite conductor from his bus. But he did not mind it. Why?

Ans: When the author missed the polite conductor from his bus he didn't mind it because he understood that it meant that he had taken his warm behaviour to a different route. He says that the sunny behaviour that the conductor created cannot be found everywhere.

(xvi) "The policeman is a necessary symbol...."

Why does the writer say so?

Ans: "The policemen is a necessary symbol" because men have become highly civilized but society is not yet crime free. That's why the presence of police is a necessity in society. The presence of police shows society is not fully crime free.



(xvii) What is the story of Lord Chesterfield who had a sweet revenge upon the boorish man?

Ans: One day, Lord Chesterfield was ‘taking the wall’ in a lane. Then a scoundrel came from the opposite direction and rudely said to the Lord that he did not give the wall to a scoundrel. The Lord immediately jumped into the mud and said, “I always do”. It was a sweet revenge on the scoundrel.

D. Answer the following questions in about 80 words each:

(i) There is no allowance for moral and intellectual damage”.

Why does the writer say so in the context of the liftman and the rude passenger?

Ans: In an office in London, a gentleman told the liftman ‘Top’ without the word ‘please’. The Liftman demanded ‘Top Please’. But the passenger refused to do so. Then the liftman feeling hurt, pushed the passenger out of the lift. The man then complained to the law court which found the liftman guilty of assaulting the passenger. The author explains that law did so because discourtesy is not a legal offence. As such no one can assault a man for being uncivil. Law does not compel a man to say ‘please’. That is why law had to punish the liftman.

(ii) “This does not mean that the damages are negligible.”

Why does the writer say so in spite of the fact that incivility is not a legal offence?

Ans: A liftman in a London office pushed a passenger out of the lift for refusing to address him with the word ‘please.’ The man took the liftman to the court and the court fined the liftman on charges of assault, the author says that the court was right in punishing the liftman because discourtesy is not a legal offence. The writer, however, says that it does not mean the damages caused by discourtesy are negligible. Incivility hurts a man more than physical pain. A kick on the shin will soon pass away but hurting someone’s self-respect lingers for a much longer time and spoils the mental equilibrium of a man.

(iii) “But all the same the law cannot become the guardian of our private manners.”

Explain why the writer says so in spite of the fact that the damages caused by incivility are not negligible.

Ans: The writer says that incivility is not a legal offence. A man might be as uncivil as he wishes, but law cannot punish him. The writer, however, says that it doesn’t mean that the damages caused by incivility are negligible. It affects a large number of people. There are wives



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whose husbands are not violent but rude, making the lives of innumerable wives miserable. But, in spite of it, the law cannot be guardian of our private manners. It is so because it will not be possible to administer law against uncivilities. There will be no end to fighting in the name of civility and life cannot go on.

(iv) “While it is true that there is no law that compels us to say ‘Please’ there is a social practice much older and much more scared than any law which enjoins us to be civil.”

Explain why civility is important in the light of the above remark.

Ans: There is no law that compels us to say ‘please’ and ‘thank you.’ Yet, the writer says that it does not mean that we should not say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ or be uncivil in our day -to -day social intercourse with fellow human beings. It is so because the practice of being polite and civil is an age-old practice which is considered sacred from time immemorial. Words like ‘thank you’ and ‘please’ are like small coins. They make life’s social relation go on an easy ‘give’ and ‘take’ instead of superiors ordering inferiors.

(v) Write about the author’s encounter with the polite conductor when he found he had left home without any money.

Ans: One day the author boarded a city bus. Then he found he had left home without any money. This made him very uneasy. He became frightened at the way the conductor might treat him. He might be looked at as a fool or even like a knave. Even if he was let down easily he would face the inconvenience of going back home. But, on contrary, the conductor told him that he need not get off the bus. He said he would give him his ticket and that he should pay the money next time they meet. This treatment was unusual and the writer realized the conductor was very good natured and polite man.

(vi) “I found that he irradiated such an atmosphere of good-temper and kindness that a journey with him was a lesson in natural courtesy and good manners”. Explain the activities of the polite bus conductor in the light of the above remark.

Ans: While boarding a city bus, the author met an unusually polite and good natured bus conductor. The writer began to observe him and found a curious pleasure in his constant good nature. He had a lot of patience and this made his passengers happy. If it was raining he would tell someone on the upper deck that there was room inside. He treated old men as his father and children as their father. With young people he made merry jest. If there was a blind man, he not only set him down but also saw to it that he was safely on his way. From all this, the writer found that his good nature created an atmosphere of good temper and kindness in his bus.



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(vii) “In lightening their spirits he lightened his own task.” Explain how the conductor lightened his task as a bus conductor.

Ans: In his bus route the author came across a good natured bus-conductor. He was kind, polite and good-natured. He treated old people as his father and children as his sons. With young people he always made some merry-jest. His polite behaviour made everyone in the bus happy. There was always a kind of joy in the bus like a sunny weather. As a result, every passenger in the bus was friendly with him and they made his task of collecting fare easy. Conductor’s task is usually tiresome but the polite conductor had lightened his task.

(viii) What was the author’s recommendation for getting back the lost sense of civility in society?

Ans: The writer feels that politeness and civility has disappeared from modern society. The World War is responsible for it. People had seen too much of cruelty during the war. As a result civility has disappeared. The writer says we must get back civilities in order to make day-to-day life sweet, kindly and tolerable. He says that we cannot take the help of law to bring back civility and polite behaviour, because law cannot be guardian of our behaviour. On the other hand we cannot get them back by using violence. The writer says that the best way of getting back politeness would be to use elaborate politeness when we come across rude behaviour.



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