

NCERT Solutions for Class 11 English Snapshots Chapter 8 The Tale of Melon City

Question 1.

Narrate 'The Tale of Melon City' in your own words.

Answer:

The ruler of the City State pretended to be justice loving and gentle. (But he was brainless and dispolite) Once he ordered a grand city gate to be built over the main road. He gave out that he wanted the moral improvement of all the spectators. One day the King rode out along that thoroughfare. His crown hit against the low arch and fell off his head. He took it as a disgrace of the crown. He ordered the guilty to be hanged.

He first summoned the chief of builders to pay for his fault. The builder chief passed on the blame to workers who blamed the wrong sized bricks. The King sent for the masons who put the blame on the architect. The planner said in self defence that the King himself had made bad correction in the original plan.

A noose was set up. But it was somewhat high. Only the King was found tall enough to fit the noose. He was hanged. As per custom, the new king was named by an idiot who was the first to pass by the road. He named 'A Melon' and the melon, looking fool was crowned king.

Question 2.

What impression would you form of a State where the King was 'just and placid' ?

Answer:

It was a small city ruled by a mindless King. He could not make any sensible decision on his own. He called himself just and gentle. When actually he was a duffer. He thought that the new city gate would enlighten the onlookers. He lost his head when he lost his crown.

He wanted somebody to be hanged because the common people demanded it. But he could not fix the guilt. He himself was finally executed because he was tall enough to fit the noose. The new ruler was worse than the ex-ruler. He appeared like a melon because an idiot had suggested and named him It was a Kingdom of fools.

Question 3.

How, according to you, can peace and liberty be maintained in a State ?

Answer:

A ruler's first and premost responsibility is to maintain law and order in the state. The masses demand peace and basic freedom of faith as well as expression. They become restive and take to violence if the ruler foolishly or cruelly and in an arbitrary planner. Only rule of law and impartial judiciary can keep people happy as well as contented.

Question 4.

Suggest a few instances in the poem which highlight humour and irony.

Answer:

The Tale of Melon City tells a humorous story in verse. It has no moral or message. It, however, highlights the fact that a non-sensical ruler can make the masses miserable. Nobody is safe in such a state where the King goes by his whims. Such an idiot ruler pays a heavy price with his own life.

It was ironical that the brainless and indecisive ruler called himself just and placid or gentle. He built the city gate for the moral improvement of the road users. When his crown was thrown off his head, he decided to hang somebody. The person finally 'chosen on the basis of his height. The ministers followed the custom mindlessly. They executed the King as per Royal decree. They selected the melon-like new King on the suggestion of an idiot. Thus all the situations, decisions and actions are ironic or ridiculous.

Question 5.

The Tale of Melon City has been narrated in a verse form. This is a unique style which lends extra charm to an ancient tale. Find similar examples in your language.

Answer:

The following poem narrates the legend of an old lady who angered Saint Peter because of her greed. Let's read it :