



# INDIAN SCHOOL DARSAIT DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



Subject :English

Topic :SNAKE-By D.H. Lawrence

Worksheet .No:16

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Student : \_\_\_\_\_ Class &Division : \_\_\_\_\_ Roll Number : \_\_\_\_

I **Read the following extracts and answer the question that follow.**

1. ***In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark carob-tree  
I came down the steps with my pitcher*** 4

***And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he was at the trough before me.***

a) Why had the poet come down?

The poet came to the trough to fill his pitcher.

b) Why did he decide to wait?

He decided to wait as the snake was there to drink water at the trough before the poet. On seeing the beautiful creature, the poet was fascinated and took the snake to be his guest so didn't want to disturb him. He felt honoured as he considered it to be godly and the lord of lords.

c) Who was at the trough before him?

The golden brown snake was at the trough before the poet.

d) Why did the snake come there?

It came there to drink water as it was a very hot day.

2. ***"The voice of my education said to me***

***He must be killed,***

***For in Sicily, the black, black snakes are innocent, the gold are venomous.***

***And voices in me said. If you were a man"***

a. Who speaks the above lines?

The poet D.H. Lawrence speaks these lines.

b. Who is 'He' in the above lines?

'He' in the above lines is the snake.

c. Why must 'He' be killed?

'He' must be killed as he is poisonous.

d. What does the word 'venomous' mean?

Poisonous.

3. ***And truly I was afraid, I was most afraid, But even so, honoured still more***

***That he should seek my hospitality***

***From out the dark door of the secret earth.***

a) Who was the speaker afraid of?

The speaker was afraid of the golden snake that visited his trough to drink water.

b) Why was the speaker afraid?

He was afraid because in Sicily, it is believed that the golden brown snakes are venomous.

c) What do we come to know about the speaker's character from these lines?

These lines reflect that the poet is controlled by fear and fascination as he is left with the conflicting emotions between rational and his natural feelings.

d) Why did he feel honoured?

The poet felt honoured because the snake chose to visit his trough. Lawrence compares the snake to a god, a king, and a lord of life. It almost seems as if he feels that the snake is above him.

4. ***Was it humility, to feel so honoured?***

***I felt so honoured.***

***And yet those voices:***

a) Why did the poet feel honoured?

He felt honoured because the snake was a guest at his water trough.

b) Which 'voices' are referred to in these lines?

Voices of education and conscience.

c) What does 'humility' in the first line mean?

Courteous behaviour/politeness/humbleness.

d) Identify the poem.

Snake, by D.H. Lawrence.

5. ***And immediately I regretted it.***

***I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act !***

***I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human education.***

a) What did the poet regret?

The poet regretted his act of throwing a log at the snake.

b) The last line shows that the poet is \_\_\_\_\_

Remorseful.

c) 'Paltry' means.

Worthless.

d) The poet accused his human education because \_\_\_\_\_

It prompted him to harm the snake.

II **SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS:**

2

1. Why did the poet have to wait near the water trough?

Ans :The poet had to wait near the water trough because he was the second visitor. The snake had been the first one there, where the water dripped from the tap in a small clearness and the poet had to wait for his turn because of the snake.

2. How does the poet describe the snake while he was drinking water?

Ans :The snake looked majestic while he drank water from the trough. He drank it slowly and silently. After drinking water, he flickered his two forked tongue and lifted his head vaguely to look around as the cattle do when they drink water.

3. How did the snake get its colour?

Ans :As the snake came from the bottom of the earth, its skin took the earth-brown colour of the soil. This made the poet describe the snake in terms of 'earth'.

4. Explain 'And depart peaceful, pacified and thankless'.

Ans : The snake appeared to be pacified and satisfied, for he had taken water generously. He was not the harmless kind, neither had the poet given him any reason, so there was no confrontation. The poet believes that the snake has no reason to thank the poet for a natural resource like water which is God's gift for all.

5. Why did the narrator allow the snake to quench his thirst first?  
 Ans :The narrator was a thorough gentlemen who allowed the snake to quench his thirst first because the snake was already there at the water trough when he came down with a pitcher to drink water. He treated the snake as an honoured guest and held him in great esteem as he found him to be a majestic and royal creature.
6. What does the poet compare the snake's drinking habits to? Why?  
 Ans :The poet compares the snake's drinking habits to that of cattle drinking water. He does so because the snake lifted his head like cattle and sometimes looked up vaguely like drinking cattle do.
7. What did the voice education teach the poet?  
 Ans :The voice of education taught the poet that in Sicily black snakes are innocent but golden snakes are venomous and dangerous so they must be killed.
8. Why did the poet try to harm the snake?  
 Ans :The poet tried to harm the snake because his education told him that in Sicily, golden snakes were venomous and a real man would take a stick and finish it off. Moreover, he didn't want that he should be labelled as a coward.
9. Why does the poet feel that he had done a paltry act?  
 Ans :The poet had ignored the voice of his conscience. He listened to the voice of education and just as the snake was about to leave, he picked up a log and threw it at him. The snake had not harmed him even then he hit him. Later he felt bad for it and his conscience pricked him.
10. Why did D.H. Lawrence treat the snake as a king?  
 Ans :The snake had come out of the burning bowels of the earth. After quenching his thirst it started going back and the poet hit him with a log. The poet instantly felt sorry for his unrefined and contemptible act and cursed the voice of education that had shaped his thought processes and urged him to kill the snake. But the snake retreated into the hole in the wall like a majestic king in exile.

### III LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS:

8

1. The poem, 'Snake' reminds us of the fact that animals too have a right to life which we have no right to deny them. Describe how man should co-exist with nature and its creatures for ecological balance.  
 Ans :Value Points : Must go by the voice of conscience, must have mutual respect, belief in peaceful co-existence necessary for survival, has no right to harm other forms of life, must believe in 'live and let live.' (any other relevant point)  
 The poem, 'Snake' reminds us of the fact that animals too have a right to life which we have no right to deny them. One should always listen to the voice of conscience that does not allow us to play with these brainless and innocent creatures. Man cannot afford to tamper with ecology as it has been carefully planned and laid out by nature and it may result in the extinction of wild animals and in the depletion of forests and their wealth.

Further man will have to face dire consequences like landslides, floods , droughts and famines if he harms the ecological balance. Nature has supplied the living creatures with abundant resources and man in particular has been able to co-exist with the least discomfort. So it is our moral duty to have mutual respect for these creatures and believe in the principle of Peaceful Coexistence.

2. You have read the poem 'Snake' and you understand the dilemma faced by the poet. Suppose you had been there instead of the poet, how would you have behaved? Write a letter to your friend Prateek, expressing this situation and how did you resolve it.

92, G.P. Road  
ABC City

12 October 2018

Dear Prateek,

I wish to recount a strange experience that I underwent recently. One day as I had come to fill my pitcher with water from an open water-trough, I saw a snake drinking water there.

My first instinct was fright and then I felt like killing him, because that is what we do generally. Nevertheless, I hid behind the door and watched the snake. The snake was very relaxed, very slack and had great style of moving about. After drinking water, the snake went back into the hole. I felt happy that I had not hit him.

I am happy I followed the voice of my instincts. What is your opinion? Please write to me. Hope you and your family is in good health. Convey my regards to all. Take care.  
Mohan.

3. At the end of the day the poet, D.H. Lawrence writes a diary entry in 120-150 words describing his encounter with the snake and expressing his remorse for throwing a log at him. Write his diary entry.

Friday  
19 October 2018  
11 pm

I had a strange experience in the morning when I went to fill my pitcher with water. I saw a snake drinking water from the trough. I felt honoured at his presence. I was fascinated by him and let him drink water. I stood and waited like a second comer.

The 'voice of education' provoked me to kill the snake as it was golden and poisonous. But my inner conscience pricked me that the snake had come as a guest and so should not be killed. Suddenly I saw the snake going back. I picked up a log and threw it the retracting snake. The snake twisted but disappeared into a hole in the ground.

I am filled with guilt and regret at the act of throwing the log. A feeling of remorse is overpowering me, I should not have done that because the snake had shown no intention to harm me.

D.H. Lawrence.