

James Grover Thurber

I. Answer the following questions:

1. Where was the author when he heard the noise?

The author had just stepped out of the bathtub and was busy in rubbing himself with a towel when he heard the noise.

2. What did the narrator think the unusual sound was?

The narrator thought that the unusual sound was the steps of a man walking rapidly around the dining – table downstairs.

3. What were the various sounds the brothers heard when they went downstairs?

When the brothers went downstairs, they heard the steps of a man circled the dining – room table and started up the stairs towards them.

4. Who were the narrator neighbours?

Bodwell, a retired engraver and his wife were the narrator neighbours.

5. How did the Bodwells react, when a shoe was thrown into their house?

Mr. Bodwell was shouting, frothing a little and shaking his fist. Mrs. Bodwell suggested to sell the house and go back to Peoria.

6. What did the Bodwells think when they heard the mother shout?

The Bodwells thought that there were burglars in their house.

7. What was the grandfather wearing?

The grandfather was wearing a long flannel nightgown over long woolen pants, a night cap and a leather jacket around his chest.

8. What conclusions did grandfather jump to when he saw the cops?

The grandfather jumped to the conclusion that the cops were deserters from General Meade's army.

9. Were the policemen willing to leave the house?

No, the policemen were not willing to leave the house.

10. What made the reporter gaze at the author?

The author had put on one of his mother's dress and he was like a slot machine. So the reporter gazed at the author.

II. Answer the following questions in a sentence or two:

11. Why was the narrator sorry to have paid attention to the footsteps?

The narrator was sorry to have paid attention to the footsteps as it raised such a hullabaloo of misunderstanding at his home.

12. Why did Herman and the author slam the doors?

Herman and the author slammed the doors because they heard the footsteps started up the stairs towards them.

13. What woke up the mother?

The slamming of the doors woke up the mother.

14. What do you understand by the mother's act of throwing the shoe?

I feel that the mother's act of throwing the shoe was incomparable. It was unnecessary at the moment.

15. What do you think Mrs. Bodwell wanted to sell the house?

The pane of glass was shattered causing fear about the house and also her husband had mild attacks earlier. So Mrs. Bodwell wanted to sell the house.

16. How did the cops manage to enter the locked house?

The cops banged their shoulders against the big heavy front door and they managed to enter the house.

17. Why were the policeman prevented from entering grandfather's room?

The grandfather had an opinion that the cops were from General Meade's men. If he happened to see the cops, he might mistake them for the deserters. So the author tried to prevent the policemen from entering grandfather's room.

18. Who used the zither and how?

The narrator's pet, a guinea pig used the zither. It would always sleep on it.

19. Mention the things that the grandfather imagined?

The grandfather imagined that the cops were the deserters of general Meade's men.

III. Answer the following question in about 100-50 words:

1. Describe the funny incident that caused the confusion in the house.

(or)

Narrate the extensive search operation made by the policemen in the house.

| | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| PROSE | : | The Night the Ghost Got In. |
| AUTHOR | : | James Grover Thurber |
| CHARACTERS | : | James Thurber - the narrator, Herman - his brother, their mother, their grandfather, Mr.&Mrs. Bodwell - the neighbour and the cops. |
| THEME | : | Imagination of odd things always leads to absolute humour. |
| PLOT SUMMARY | : | Ghost - Hullabaloo |

A day without laughter is a day
wasted.

'The Night the Ghost Got In' is a short story by James Thurber, written as a fictionalized account at a night. He remembers as a child when misunderstanding about footsteps in the kitchen turned into a fiasco involving a wounded police officer and a broken window.

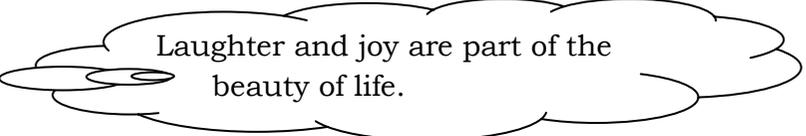
The story began with the young James Thurber who was the narrator, hearing footsteps when he stepped out of the bathtub at one O'Clock in the morning. Everyone was asleep - his brother Herman in his bedroom, his mother upstairs and his grandfather in the attic. At first, he thought that the foot steps might belong to his father and his brother Roy, Who had been travelling from Indianapolis and were expected home at any time. The footsteps went around and around the dining table. He then assumed that there was a burglar downstairs. He wrapped a towel around his waist and immediately got out of the bathroom. It didn't enter his mind that it was a ghost.

James woke up his brother Herman and alerted him. When they heard the footsteps coming up the stairs towards them, they rushed into the room and slammed the door. This slamming of the doors woke up their mother and she assumed that the burglars would have entered into their house. She wanted to call the police. She grabbed a shoe and tossed it out the closest window, breaking the window of the neighbour, a man named Bodwell. After some confusion, he began to understand that there were no burglars in his own house and that he should call the police for the James family.

The police arrived promptly and ransacked the house in search of intruders. The investigation continued and the police came to the room of James's grandfather. When the cops entered the grandfather's attic, he believed that the police were deserters from Meade's army, trying to hide away in his attic. After some yelling, he shot one of the officers with a gun.

Ultimately, the police found no burglars in the house and went with one of their men wounded. Next morning, the family thought that the grandfather had forgotten all about the previous

night. But he asked about the presence of cops in the house and explained his difficulty in search of water in the dining room. Thus the author narrated his experience with his grandfather who created chaos which ended on the light hearted note.



Laughter and joy are part of the beauty of life.

UNIT-II POEM

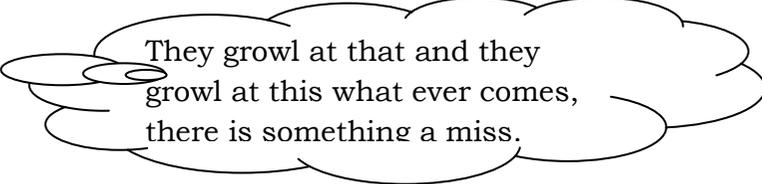
THE GRUMBLE FAMILY

(Lucy Maud Montgomery)

Write a paragraph on “The Grumble Family” and their attitude towards other folks:

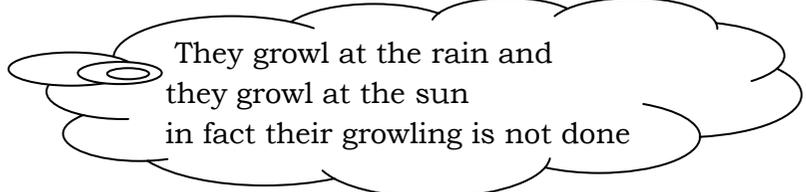
Lucy Maud Montgomery (1874 – 1942) was a Canadian author best known for a series of novelist, short stories and poems. Her works, diaries and letters have been read and studied by scholars and readers world wide.

In this poem the poet describes about a family who always keep grumbling. This family lives in a Complaining street where they are not satisfied with any thing.



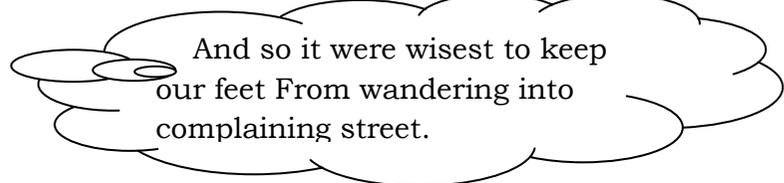
They growl at that and they growl at this what ever comes, there is something a miss.

The grumbling family keeps grumbling at everything they come across. They are totally dissatisfied with their circumstance so they find nothing right at whatever happens. Though their status is high they are called grumblers. These type of people even scold the weather for being neither too hot nor cold. Nothing goes right with the people whom they come across in the complaining street, because they are depressed and frightened in life.



They growl at the rain and they growl at the sun in fact their growling is not done

The grumbling family grumbles at the rain and at the sun in fact their grumbling never comes to an end. By chance if everything goes right even then they grumble that nothing is their to complain. The strange thing is that no one will recognize his family’s name for never a grumbler will own that he is connected with it. The poet also expresses that, if anyone stays among them too long they will also learn their ways and will adopt the attitude of the grumbling family.



And so it were wisest to keep our feet From wandering into complaining street.

It is wise to keep away ourselves from complaining street or we’ll be mistaken as grumblers. Montgomery advises us to love one another and move with a smile, no matter if things do sometimes go wrong. Then what ever be our status high or humble we’ll never belong to the grumbling family.

II. Read the following lines from the poem and answer the questions given below:

1. There’s a family nobody likes to meet;
They live, it is said, on Complaining street
 - a) Where does the family live?
The family lives in Complaining street.
 - b) Why do you think the street is named as ‘Complaining street’?
The street is named as ‘Complaining street’ because the people in this street are always complaining and grumbling.

2. They growl at that and they growl at this;
Whatever comes, there is something a miss;
- a) What does the word 'growl' mean here?
'Growl' means, the people grumbling about every thing.
- b) Why do they find everything a mess?
The people are totally dissatisfied with their circumstance. So they find everything as a mess.
3. Nothing goes right with the folks you meet
Down on that gloomy complaining street.
- a) What is the opinion about the folks you meet down the street?
The opinion about the folks we meet down the street is that nothing happens right.
- b) What does the word 'gloomy' mean here?
'Gloomy' means the people are depressed and frightened in life.
4. The worst thing is that if anyone stays
Among them too long he will learn their ways
- a) What is the worst thing that can happen if anyone stays with them?
If anyone stays with them, they too will acquire their negative qualities.
- b) What are the ways of the Grumble family?
The grumble family keeps on grumbling about everything. They are never satisfied with anything or any person.
5. And so it were wisest to keep our feet
From wandering into complaining street.
- a) What is the wisest thing that the poet suggests.
The poet suggests us to keep away from complaining people and not to get acquainted with them.
- b) What does the phrase 'to keep our feet from wandering' refer to?
We should not walk into this complaining street even leisurely.
6. Let us learn to walk with a smile and a song
No matter if things do something go wrong.
- a) What does the poet expect everyone to learn?
The poet expects everyone to learn to walk with a smile and a joyful heart.

- b) What should we do when things go wrong sometimes?
Eventhough things go wrong sometimes we should face life optimistically.

Literary Devices:

1. And whether their station be high or humble
- a) Pick out the alliteration from the above line
the alliteration words are high, humble.
- b) Pick out the other examples for alliteration from the poem.
The alliterated words from the poem are that – this; summer – scold; thing – that, long – learn; were – wisest ; smile – song
3. The weather is always too hot or cold;
summer and winter alike they scold.
Nothing goes right with the folks you meet
Down on that gloomy complaining street.
- a) Pick out the rhyming words from the given lines.
the rhyming words are: Cold – Scold; Meet – Street
- b) Identify the rhyme scheme from the above lines.
The rhyme Scheme is – aa; bb
4. The weather is always too hot or cold;
- a) What is the figure of speech applied here?
The figure of speech applied here is oxymoron
5. Summer and winter alike they scold
- a) Identify the figure of speech used here?
The figure of speech used here is Oxymoron
- UNIT – 2 SUPPLEMENTARY
ZIGZAG – ASHA NEHEMIA
- I. Answer the following questions in one or two sentences:
1. Why did Dr. Ashok's cousin call him?
Dr. Ashok's cousin called him to check whether he could keep zigzag with them when he leaves for Alaska.
2. Mention atleast two expressions which shows that Mrs. Krishnan was not willing to have Zigzag at home?
A) Somu's 'favourite' possessions that he has given to them were absolute nuisances.
B) She was very busy with her painting exhibition.

3. What other various pets did Somu have?

Somu had a giant green and gold fighting beetle, Spitfire, a pet snake and an African side winder.

4. What was Mrs. Krishnan busy with?

Mrs. Krishnan was busy getting her paintings ready for an exhibition the next week.

5. What commotion did the boomerang cause in the neighbourhood?

Boomerang sliced through all the TV aerials in the neighbourhood causing permanent damage to several cars on the parking lot.

6. What happened when Somu left Zigzag with the Krishnan's?

When Somu left Zigzag with the Krishnans, it stopped talking and singing. It perched on the curtain rod and went off to sleep.

7. How did Zigzag communicate with the Krishnan's?

Zigzag communicated with the Krishnans in Snorish.

8. What was the email message sent to Somu by Dr. Krishnan?

Dr. Krishnan sent an e-mail to Somu asking him on how to stop Zigzag from snoring.

9. What did Arvind Confess?

Arvind confessed that he was looking forward to go to school for the first time because it was as calm as a monastery compared to their house.

10. Why did Mrs. Jhunjhunwala buy the painting?

Mrs. Jhunjhunwala bought the painting as she loved the new technique of painting and adored those streaky orangey bits on sunset Marina.

II. Answer the following questions in a paragraph of about 100 words:

1. Write in your own words the various commotions caused by Zigzag at Dr. Krishnan's residence.

Title: Zigzag

Author: Asha Nehemiah

Theme : Comic Commotions of a pet

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Asha Nehemiah was born in 1958 at Chennai. She has lived, studied and worked in eight different cities. Humour, fantasy, mystery and adventure are the strong elements in her work.

Life is very simple but we insist on making it complicated.

Asha Nehemiah unfolds the delicate love which a bird can exhibit to the astonishment of the inmates.

Zigzag picked up a walnut and deposited the nut on the chandelier hanging from the ceiling. Then it took all the fruits and transferred on to the blades of the ceiling fan. As soon as the cook, Visu left, Zigzag perched on the curtain rod, went off to sleep. The moment he fell asleep, he began to snore and the commotion began. Then it grew louder and louder until it sounded like a herd of elephants. Zigzag's snore pounded the ear drums till their head ached. Everyone in the house tried their best to stop but it ended in vain. Mrs. Krishnan untied a roll of cotton wool to stuff in her ears. Just then, their maid Lakshmi shrieked. They froze in fear for she had switched on the fan on which Zigzag had left some fruits and nuts. One slice of over-ripe papaya came whizzing off the fan. It splattered all over Mrs. Krishnan's unfinished masterpiece, sunset at Marina. They froze in horror.

However, through all these commotions Zigzag slept unconcerned and snored on.

2. What was the turn of events when Zigzag was taken to the clinic.

"She decided to free herself, dance into the wind, Create a new language.

Dr. Krishnan took Zigzag to his clinic. He asked Zigzag to wait in the car but he was shocked at the turn of events. Zigzag perched himself on the nurse's reception table. It warned all the

patients to be silent. The clinic was a noisy place but it later transformed into a clam place. Zigzag soothed the frightened patients, scolded the naughty ones and made the crying ones smile. His yam-digging song and recitation of French poetry reduced the children to helpless laughter instead of tears. When the last patient had left, he called Zigzag to his room. Zigzag flew in and sat on his table. Dr. Krishnan knew that it was an absolute treasure.

3. Narrate the story of Zigzag in your own words:

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Asha Nehemiah, born in 1958 at Chennai is now a resident of Bangalore. She has always been interested in writing. Author Nehemiah unfolds the delicate love which a bird can exhibit to the astonishment of the inmates.

“Zigzag is Queer and Weird”.

Dr. Ashok T. Krishnan, was a child specialist. His wife Mrs. Krishnan was busy with her painting sunset at Marina. They had two children Arvind and Maya Dr. Somu was a friend of Dr. Krishnan. He was leaving for Alaska so he asked his friend Dr. Krishnan to look after the talking bird, Zigzag, Zigzag was harm less, unusual and a lovable bird. It was bred by an African witch doctor, who gifted it to Dr. Somu when he toured the deepest jungles of Africa.

Mrs. Krishnan considers it a nuisance. Their son Arvind and daughter Maya were keen on having a pet. They both discussed the unique gifts which were given by Uncle Somu. Though the bird knew twenty one different languages, it refused to speak a single word. It climbed on the curtain rod and fell

asleep. The bird at first, before resorting to a steadfast sleep eats the nuts and fruits, keeps them safe in the chandelier and the fan blades. The maid shrieks in an excited manner thinking that she is blessed with papayas and bananas raining inside the room, when she switched on the fan. One slice of papaya was splattered all over Mrs. Krishnan’s unfinished masterpiece, Sunset at Marina. She grew angry.

For a change, Dr. Krishnan took the bird to his clinic. Zigzag felt happy. It went about its duty as it was trained. Suddenly things took a turn when Zigzag starts speaking. Dr. Krishnan received a phone call from his wife. She told that her painting was bought by Mrs. Jhunjhunwala for Rs.5000/- and this happened because of Zigzag. So they all were happy and accepted to keep Zigzag with them.

IDENTIFY THE CHARACTER / SPEAKER

1. It’s all because my patients were making so much noise and crying so loudly-----
Dr. Ashok T. Krishnan
2. He thinks I said “yes”, eventhough I clearly said “no”!
Somu
3. It interrupted their nine-year old daughter Maya
Zigzag
4. “Zigzag is a most harmless, unusual and lovable bird”-
Dr. Ashok T. Krishnan
5. A talented artist, she applied a dab of yellow – ochre paint onto her painting -----
Mrs. Krishnan
6. “Remember the rare insect – eating plant he brought back from the wettest corner.
Mrs. Krishnan

7. "Ma! that's not really true"
Arvind
8. "That's been really useful:
Maya
9. "And what about the aboriginal boomerang uncle Somu brought us all the way from Australia?"
Arvind
10. "Great hit indeed!"
Mrs. Krishnan
11. "It's Somu's thoughtless way that reduce me to tears!"
Mrs. Krishnan
12. "May I take Zigzag to school, Papa?"
Arvind
13. "Come in Zigzag, come in, dear!"
Visu, the cook
14. Its curved beak was sunflower – yellow and its eyes were the colour of cola.
Zigzag
15. Don't worry, children", he comforted .
Visu, the cook
16. "Twenty-one languages, he's supposed to know!"
Mrs. Krishnan
17. "Yet this bird chooses to communicate only in snorish, snorese ----".
Mrs. Krishnan
18. I thought it was scientific fact that birds couldn't snore'.
Maya
19. 'We' ve been blessed! We've been truly blessed!
Lakshmi, the maid
20. 'I am going crazy with the sound of Zigzag snoring.
Mrs. Krishnan
21. "That does it',-----
Mrs. Krishnan
22. 'Come on then, Zigzag'
Dr. Krishnan
23. "You know Mrs. Jhunjhunwula, the art critic?"
Mrs. Krishnan
24. A Zigzag Way, I'd call it, wouldn't you?
Dr. Krishnan

25. "She's bought it for herself, for ₹ 5,000!"
Mrs. Jhunjhunwula

IV. Mind Map:

