

Access answers to NCERT Solutions for Class 10 English Chapter 8 Mijbil the Otter

Question 1:

What 'experiment' did Maxwell think Camusfearna would be suitable for?

Answer:

Maxwell had travelled to Southern Iraq in 1956 and he fancied the idea of keeping an otter as a pet instead of a dog. He thought Camusfearna was surrounded by water that was a stone's throw from its door, so it would be an eminently suitable spot for this 'experiment'.

Question 2:

Why does he go to Basra? How long does he wait there, and why?

Answer:

Maxwell went to Basra to the Consulate-General to collect and answer his mail from Europe. However, though his friend's mail had arrived, his had not. So he cabled to England and three days later, he even made a phone call which had to be booked 24 hours in advance. On the first day, the line was out of order; on the second day, the exchange was closed for a religious holiday. On the third day, there was another breakdown. His friend had left and the writer arranged to meet him in a week's time. Finally after five days, his mail arrived. Hence, Maxwell had to wait for five days for arrival of his mail.

Question 3:

How does he get the otter? Does he like it? Pick out the words that tell you this.

Answer:

When the writer's mail arrived, he took to his bedroom to read. He saw two Arabs squatting on the floor with a sack that squirmed from time to time. They handed him a note which was from his friend, which mentioned that he had sent him an otter.

Yes, Maxwell liked it. We know this from his words "An otter fixation" used to describe his feelings towards the otter. He felt the term was used to express his strong attachment towards otters like any other otter owner would feel.

Question 4:

Why was the otter named 'Maxwell's otter'?

Answer:

An otter was typically called by zoologists as "Lutrogale Perspicillata Maxwelli", so it was called Maxwell's otter in short.

Question 5:

Tick the right answer. In the beginning, the otter was

- aloof and indifferent
- friendly
- hostile

Answer:

In the beginning, the otter was aloof and indifferent.

Question 6:

What happened when Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom? What did it do two days after that?

Answer:

When Maxwell first took Mijbil to the bathroom, the otter first went wild with joy in the water for the first half an hour. He plunged and rolled in it, shooting up and down the length of the bathtub and making enough slosh and splash for a hippo.

After two days, the otter suddenly disappeared from Maxwell's bedroom and went to the bathroom to play in the water and he was up on the end of the bathtub and fumbling at the chromium taps with his paws. The author watched in amazement how the little creature had turned the tap to produce a trickle of water slowly and after a moment achieved the full flow.

How was Mijbil transported to England?

Answer:

Mijbil was packed in a box as the airlines had directed the author. As British airlines did not allow pets on board the author had to book a ticket on a different airline from Iraq to Paris and then Paris to London.

Question 2.

What did Mij do to the box?

Answer:

The box was lined with a metal sheet. Mij didn't feel comfortable in the box and tried to escape. In his attempt to escape, Mij tore into the metal lining of the box and in the process hurt himself.

Question 3.

Why did Maxwell put the otter back in the box? How do you think he felt when he did this?

Answer:

As there was no other way to carry Mij to London, Maxwell put in the box again. He must have felt pity on the way the otter hurt himself. Moreover, he must be worried as well.

Question 4.

Why does Maxwell say the airhostess was "the very queen of her kind"?

Answer:

The airhostess was very sympathetic after listening to Maxwell's story. She understood how he might be feeling and then gave him permission to take the otter out of the box. Due to all this, Maxwell referred her as "the very queen of her kind".

6. What happened when Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom? What did it do two days after that?

Ans: The otter goes wild with happiness in the water when Maxwell takes him to the bathroom. He starts jumping and rolling in the water, he goes up and down in the bathtub and makes enough splashes for a hippo.

After two days, it escaped to the bathroom from his bedroom. By the time Maxwell gets there, the otter is on the end of the bathtub. He fumbles at the taps with his paws and it turns the tap and some water comes out and in a moment, water comes with full flow.

7. How was Mij to be transported to England?

Ans: Maxwell first books a flight to Paris and from there he would go to London. The airline says that Mij should travel in a box which must not be more than 18 inches square and the box should be placed on the floor near Maxwell's feet.

8. What did Mij do to the box?

Ans: Mij tries to escape from the box because the metal sheet lining of the box was uncomfortable for him. When Mij tries to escape, he tears the metal lining of the box and ends up hurting himself and starts to bleed.

9. Why did Maxwell put the otter back in the box? How do you think he felt when he did this?

Ans: The only way to carry Mij to London was to put him in the box so Maxwell had to do it. He felt pity and worried about the fact that the otter had hurt himself.

10. Why does Maxwell say the air hostess was “the very Queen of her kind”?

Ans: Maxwell says this because the air hostess was kind and helpful. He tells her about the incident that happened with the box. She suggests that he put his pet on his knees. He feels immense admiration towards her after this because she understands the pain of the otter and himself.

11. What happened when the box was opened?

Ans: Mij goes out of the box when it opens. He goes down the aircraft at high speed and disappears. Everyone was crying around. A woman stands up on her seat screaming that there is a rat. Maxwell sees Mij's tail moving beneath an Indian passenger's legs. He dives to get it but he misses Mij. The airhostess tells Maxwell to sit and that we would find it. Mij returns to him after some time. It climbs on his knee and he rubs its neck and face.

12. What game had Mij invented?

Ans: Mij came up with the idea for a ping-pong ball game. He used to put the ball on one side of a sloping lid and then tried to grab it as it went down to the other side.

13. What are 'compulsive habits'? What does Maxwell say are the compulsive habits of

1. School children

2. Mij

Ans: Compulsive habits are a person's strange or weird activities or behaviour which s/he shows without any clear reason.

When going to/coming from the school, children do this weird thing where they place their feet right at the centre of each paving block. Mij had created a similar habit where he jumped to the school wall and galloped all the thirty yards of its length.

3. What group of animals do otters belong to?

Solution : Otters belong to a comparatively small group of animals called Mustellines, shared by the badger, mongoose, weasel, stoat, mink and others.

4. What guesses did the Londoners make about what Mij was?

Solution : According to Maxwell, the average Londoner does not recognize an otter. The Londoners who saw Mij made different guesses about who Mij was. They guessed, among other things, that it was a baby seal, a squirrel, a walrus, a hippo, a beaver, a bear cub, a leopard and a brontosaurus.

1. What things does Mij do which tell you that he is an intelligent, friendly and fun-loving animal who needs love?

Solution : Mij was an intelligent animal. It invented its own game out of the ping-pong balls. It screwed the tap till water began to flow and then it would play and splash in the water. Though it was aloof and indifferent in the beginning, it soon became very friendly. It formed a special attachment with Maxwell. It responded when Maxwell called out his name. It grew desperate when Maxwell left it in a box and it got hurt while trying to come out of it. After Maxwell took it out, it clung to his feet. It was a fun-loving animal. It enjoyed playing all kinds of games. It would play with a selection of toys, ping-

pong balls, marbles, rubber fruit, and a terrapin shell. It required love and affection from Maxwell and it got that readily.

2. What are some of the things we come to know about otters from this text?

Solution : Otters belong to a comparatively small group of animals called Mustellines, shared by the badger, mongoose, weasel, stoat, mink and others. Maxwell's otter was of a race previously unknown to science and was at length named by zoologists *Lutrogale perspicillata maxwelli* or Maxwell's otter. They are found in large numbers in marshes. They are often tamed by the Arabs. It is characteristic of otters that every drop of water must be extended and spread about the place; a bowl must at once be overturned, or, if it would not be overturned, be sat in and splashed in until it overflowed. For them, water must be kept on the move. Otters love playing various games, especially with a ball.

3. Why is Mij's species now known to the world as Maxwell's otter?

Solution : Maxwell's otter was of a race previously unknown to science and was at length named by zoologists *Lutrogale perspicillata* Maxwell or Maxwell's otter.

4. Maxwell in the story speaks for the otter, Mij. He tells us what the otter feels and thinks on different occasions. Given below are some things the otter does. Complete the column on the right to say what Maxwell says about what Mij feels and thinks.

What Mij does	How Mij feels or thinks
Plunges, rolls in the water and makes the water splosh and splash	_____
Screws the tap in the wrong way	_____
Nuzzles Maxwell's face and neck in the aeroplane	_____

Solution :

What Mij does	How Mij feels or thinks
Plunges, rolls in the water and makes the water splosh and splash	went wild with joy
Screws the tap in the wrong way	irritated and disappointed
Nuzzles Maxwell's face and neck in the aeroplane	distressed chitter of recognition and welcome

5. Read the story and find the sentences where Maxwell describes his pet otter. Then choose and arrange your sentences to illustrate those statements below that you think are true.

Maxwell's description

- (i) makes Mij seem almost human, like a small boy.
- (ii) shows that he is often irritated with what Mij does.
- (iii) shows that he is often surprised by what Mij does.
- (iv) of Mij's antics is comical.
- (v) shows that he observes the antics of Mij very carefully.
- (vi) shows that he thinks Mij is a very ordinary otter.
- (vii) shows that he thinks the otter is very unusual.

Solution :

(i) He spent most of his time in play.
 (iii) I watched, amazed; in less than a minute he had turned the tap far enough to produce a trickle of water, and after a moment or two achieved the full flow.

(v) A suitcase that I had taken to Iraq had become damaged on the journey home, so that the lid, when closed, remained at a slope from one end to the other. Mij discovered that if he placed the ball on the high end it would run down the length of the suitcase. He would dash around to the other end to ambush its arrival, hide from it, crouching, to spring up and take it by surprise, grab it and trot off with it to the high end once more.

(vii) It is not, I suppose, in any way strange that the average Londoner should not recognize an otter, but the variety of guesses as to what kind of animal this might be came as a surprise to me. Mij was anything but an otter.

Question I:

Describing a Repeated Action in the Past

From the table below, make as many correct sentences as you can using *would* and/or *used to*, as appropriate. (Hint: First decide whether the words in italics show an action, or a state or situation, in the past.) Then add two or three sentences of your own to it.

Emperor Akbar	<i>would</i> <i>used to</i>	<i>be fond of musical evenings.</i>
Every evening we		<i>take long walks on the beach.</i>
Fifty years ago, very few people		<i>own cars.</i>
Till the 1980s, Shanghai		<i>have very dirty streets.</i>
My uncle		<i>spend his holidays by the sea.</i>

Answer:

1. Emperor Akbar used to be fond of musical evenings.
2. Every evening we would take long walks on the beach.
3. Fifty years ago, very few people used to own cars.
4. Till the 1980s, Shanghai used to have very dirty streets.
5. My uncle used to spend his holidays by the sea.
6. My uncle used to be fond of musical evenings.
7. My uncle would take long walks on the beach.

Question II:

Noun Modifiers

1. Look at these examples from the text, and say whether the modifiers (in italics) are nouns, proper nouns, or adjective plus noun.

(i) An *otter* fixation (iv) The *London* streets

(ii) The *iron* railings (v) *soft velvet* fur

(iii) The *Tigris* marshes (vi) A *four-footed* soccer player

Answer:

1. Noun
2. Noun
3. Proper Noun

4. Proper Noun
5. Adjective plus noun
6. Adjective plus noun

2. Given below are some nouns, and a set of modifiers (in the box). Combine the nouns and modifiers to make as many appropriate phrases as you can. (Hint: The nouns and modifiers are all from the texts in this book.)

temple	girls	triangle	dresses	
person	thoughts	boys	roar	
gifts	scream	farewell	expression	
time	subject	landscape	handkerchief	
crossing	flight	chatterbox	profession	
physique	coffee	view	celebration	
college	rough	hundred	stone	ordinary
love	uncomfortable	white	slang	slack
bare	railroad	tremendous	family	marriage
plump	invigorating	panoramic	heartbreaking	birthday
incorrigible	ridiculous	loud	first	three

Answer:

1.	Temple	White temple, Stone temple
2.	Gifts	Ordinary gift, birthday gift.
3.	Time	First time, family time, college time, rough time
4.	Crossing	Railroad crossing, first crossing
5.	Physique	Plump physique, ordinary physique

6.	Girls	Plump girls, college girls
7.	Thoughts	Uncomfortable thoughts, ridiculous thoughts, ordinary thoughts, good thoughts, invigorating thoughts, heartbreaking
8.	Scream	Loud scream, heartbreaking scream
9.	Subject	Ordinary subject, college subject
10.	Flight	First flight, ordinary flight, rough flight, uncomfortable flight
11.	Coffee	Black coffee, ordinary coffee, invigorating coffee
12.	Farewell	College farewell, heartbreaking farewell
13.	Landscape	Rough landscape, bare landscape
14.	Chatterbox	Incorrigible chatterbox, ridiculous chatterbox
15.	View	Panoramic view, ordinary view, tremendous view
16.	Dresses	Ordinary dresses, birthday dresses, marriage dresses, hundred dresses
17.	Handkerchief	White handkerchief, clean handkerchief, ordinary handkerchief
18.	Profession	Family profession, first profession, ordinary profession
19.	Celebration	Birthday celebration, tremendous celebration, family celebration
20.	Roar	Loud roar, tremendous roar

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From the table below, make as many correct sentences as you can using *would* and/or *used to*, as appropriate. (Hint: First decide whether the words in *italics* show an action, or a state or situation, in the past.) Then add two or three sentences of your own to it.

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Every evening we	used to	<i>take long walks on the beach.</i>
Fifty years ago, very few people		<i>own cars.</i>
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My uncle		<i>spend his holidays by the sea.</i>

Answer:

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