

Madam Rides the Bus



Vallikkannan

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vallikannan is the pseudonym of the famous writer R.S. Krishnaswamy. He was born in a village near Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu on 12 November 1920 and died on 9 November 2006. He was a famous Tamil writer, journalist, critic and translator. He started writing at a very young age and had published 25 books by the time he turned thirty. He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi award in 1978 for his contribution to Tamil poetry.

INTRODUCTION

This is a story about the first bus journey of an eight-year-old girl. Valli. She was a curious girl. She had a strong desire to go to the nearest town by riding on a bus. She saves money for this purpose. When she has money for the ticket. She boards the bus. She enjoys her first bus journey. She does not get off the bus in the town. She remains sitting at her seat. She pays another thirty paise for the ticket and reaches home back.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Valli or Valliammai was a girl of eight years. She was very much eager about things. She had no playmates. So standing on the doorway of her house had become her favourite pastime. But she was very much fascinated by the bus ride. It was an unending joy for her. There travelled a bus between her village and the nearest town in an

interval of an hour. She had collected some details about the bus-journey. The last destination of the bus was a town. It was about six miles away from her village. The fare was thirty paise for one way. The trip to the town took forty five minutes. So she planned to take the one o'clock afternoon bus so that she could return by about two forty-five.

On one afternoon, it was a fine spring day. The afternoon bus was on the point of leaving the village. Valli called 'stop the bus! Stop the bus!' The bus slowed down and the conductor peeped outside. He called to hurry up. Standing outside the bus, Valli told that she had to go to the town. She showed some coins and got into the bus. The conductor was a jolly fellow. He called her a fine madam and pointed towards a seat. It was the slack time of the day. So very few individuals were travelling in the bus. All passengers were looking at the conductor and Valli. On hearing the whistle the bus started.

In the way, Valli was enjoying everything through her own eyes. The road was narrow. On one side there was a canal. Beyond it there were palm trees, grasslands, mountains, sky and green fields. To have a full view, she stood on the seat. All looked very wonderful to Valli. An elderly man shouted and called Valli a 'child'. He asked her to sit down. Valli was surprised at her being called a child. The conductor told that she was a very grown-up madam as a mere girl cannot travel all alone. In an angry way, she looked towards the conductor and demanded the ticket.

The conductor punched a ticket and gave it to her. He asked her not to stand when she had paid for a seat. The bus stopped. Some passengers got on. Valli sat down on her seat lest some passengers should sit over it.

At that time, an elderly woman got into the bus. She sat beside Valli. She questioned her if she was all alone. Valli did not like her. There were big holes in her ears. The earrings were very ugly. She was chewing the betel nut. Valli was fearing lest its juice should fall at any moment. She again interrogated Valli. In turn Valli gave a curt reply and asked her to mind her own business.

It was her first journey. She had planned it very well. She had saved all her stray coins that came her way. She even resisted the temptation of buying toys and balloons etc. At the village fair too she controlled herself not to enjoy the ride in the merry-go-round. Thus she had collected enough money for her journey. Her next problem was to slip out of the house. She knew that her mother used to sleep daily after lunch. Valli decided to use these hours for her Journey. Most often she used these hours for her excursion.

The bus was rolling across the landscape. Valli was happy. She clapped her hands with glee. There came a young cow, running fast, in front of the bus. The driver sounded his horn loudly. But the animal became more and more frightened. It galloped in front of the bus. It was funny for Valli. At last the

cow moved off the road. The bus came to a rail-road crossing. The train passed with utmost roar and rattle. Then the bus passed through a busy shopping street and came on a wide thoroughfare. Valli was fascinated and happy to see the displays of clothes and the big crowd. It was the last destination of the bus.

Now all the passengers got off the bus. Valli remained there in the bus. The conductor asked her if she was not ready to get off the bus. Valli replied that she would be on the same bus and gave her thirty coins to the conductor. He felt surprised and questioned what the matter was. Valli replied that she only felt like having a ride in the bus and nothing else. She went on sitting till the bus resumed its journey. She got her ticket. The same wonderful sights were before her eyes.

Then she suddenly saw a young cow dead by the roadside. She asked the conductor if it was the same cow. The conductor nodded his head. Now she was overcome with sadness. Her memory haunted her. She thought that she had been a lovely animal a little while ago but all her charm was lost. It was three-forty when the bus reached the village. She stood up and told the conductor to see him again. The conductor smiled and answered, "Madam, whenever you feel like a bus-ride come and join us. And don't forget to bring your fare". Valli laughed and went running straight for her home.

When Valli entered the house, she saw her mother talking with one of her aunts. She was from South Street. She was a chatterbox. She asked Valli where she had been. Valli only smiled. Her mother only remained busy with her. Both were discussing things outside the world. Valli said that so many things were happening without their knowledge. Her aunt was surprised and said that Valli was talking like a grown-up lady.

SUMMARY IN HINDI

वल्ली एक आठ साल की लड़की थी। वह अपने आस-पास की घटनाओं के प्रति काफी उत्सुक रहती थी। उसके पड़ोस में उसकी उम्र के बच्चे नहीं थे जो उसके साथ खेल सकें। इसलिए वह अपने घर के सामने वाले दरवाजे पर खड़ी होकर बाहर की घटनाओं को देखती रहती थी। यह उसका सबसे अच्छा समय बिताने का जरिया था। वह उस बस को देखती रहती थी जो उसके गाँव से शहर को जाती थी। धीरे-धीरे उसके मन में बस की सवारी करने का विचार पनपने लगा उसके प्रति वह आकर्षित होती जा रही थी।

उसके गाँव से पास के शहर को प्रत्येक घण्टे के अन्तर से एक बस जाती थी वह उस बस की यात्रा के विषय में जानकारी एकत्र करने लगी। शहर उसके गाँव से छः मील की दूरी पर था और उसका एक तरफ का किराया 30 पैसे था। वहाँ पहुँचने में 45 मिनट का समय लगता था। उसने एक बजे दोपहर वाली बस में यात्रा करने का निर्णय लिया ताकि वह 2 बजकर 45 मिनट में घर पहुँच जाये। एक दोपहर को बस जब लगभग चलना शुरू हो गई थी तो वल्ली ने पीछे से आवाज देकर बस रुकवाई तो कण्डक्टर ने उसे जल्दी आने को कहा और वह बस में सवार हो गई। कण्डक्टर मजाकिया प्रवृत्ति का था।

उसने कहा मैडम अपनी सीट ग्रहण कीजिये तब सभी यात्री वल्ली की तरफ देखने लगे। रास्ते में वल्ली हर दृश्य को अपनी आँखों में भर लेना चाह रही थी। सड़क पतली थी एक तरफ खाई थी और आगे जहाँ तक नजर जाती थी हरियाली ही हरियाली थी। वल्ली सब कुछ ठीक से देखने के लिए अपनी सीट पर खड़ी हो जाती है तभी बस रुकती है और एक वृद्ध महिला बस में सवार होकर वल्ली के साथ वाली सीट पर बैठ गई और उससे पूछने लगी क्या तुम अकेले यात्रा कर रही हो? क्या तुम्हें पता है शहर में कौन सी जगह जाना है? वल्ली ने रुखे स्वर में जबाब दिया कि वह अपने काम से मतलब रखे।

यह वल्ली की पहली बस यात्रा थी उसने इसकी बहुत अच्छी तरह से योजना बना रखी थी उसने अपनी बहुत सी इच्छाओं पर संयम रख कर बस के किराये के लिए पैसा बचाया था। उसकी दूसरी परेसानी घर से बाहर निकलने की थी वह जानती थी कि उसकी माँ हर रोज दोपहर के खाने के बाद सोती है। वल्ली ने निर्णय लिया कि इसी समय का उपयोग वह अपनी यात्रा के लिए करेगी ताकि घर में उसकी यात्रा के विषय में पता ना लगे। अब बस खाली भूखण्ड से गुजर रही थी। वल्ली खुशी से ताली बजा रही थी। तभी एक गाय आई और बस के आगे तेजी से दौड़ने लगी। चालक ने हॉर्न बजाया लेकिन गाय और अधिक कूदते हुए भागने लगी। अन्त में मुस्किल से गाय किनारे गई। तेजी से चलती हुई बस ने अब एक व्यस्त बाजार में प्रवेश किया। वल्ली दुकानों तथा उसमें सजे सामान से काफी प्रभावित हुई। यह बस का अन्तिम पड़ाव था।

अब सारे यात्री बस से नीचे उतर गये। केवल वल्ली ही बस में बैठी थी कण्डक्टर ने पूछा क्या वह बस से नीचे नहीं उतरेगी? वल्ली ने कहा कि वह इसी बस से वापस गाँव लौटेगी तथा अपने किराये के तीस पैसे भी दे दिये

। कण्डक्टर को आश्चर्य हुआ तो वल्ली ने बताया कि मैं केवल बस की यात्रा करना चाह रही थी बस और कोई बात नहीं है।

बस शहर से गाँव की तरफ वापस जाने लगी वल्ली फिर से खिड़की से बाहर के नजारे देखने लगी। अचानक उसने देखा कि जो गाय शहर जाते समय उनकी बस के सामने

दौड़ रही थी वह सड़क के किनारे मृत पड़ी थी। उसे किसी गाड़ी ने टक्कर मार दी थी। उसकी सारी खूबसूरती अब भयानकता में बदल चुकी थी। उसके चारों ओर खून ही खून था। गाय को ऐसी स्थिति में देखकर वल्ली बहुत दुखी हो जाती है तथा वह चुपचाप अपनी सीट में बैठ जाती है।

WORDS	MEANINGS
Mystery	Something secret, रहस्य
Curious	Eager, जिज्ञासु
Fascinating	Attractive, आकर्षक
Gradually	Slowly, धीरे-धीरे
Scarcely	Hardly, मुश्किल से
Commandingly	Firmly, दृढ़तापूर्वक
Gleaming	Shining, चमकती हुई
Luxurious	Very comfortable, काफी आरामदायक
Peered over	Looked over, झाँक कर देखा
Deep ditch	Deep trench, गहरी खाई
Concerned	Worried, चिंतित
Elaborate	Expand, विस्तार करना
Temptation	Attraction, आकर्षण
Obstacles	Hurdles, रुकावटें
Excitement	Enthusiasm, उत्साह
Horrible	Fearful, डरावना

MADAM RIDES THE BUS

1. The story is about an eight year girl named Valliammai.

1. The story is about an eight year girl named Valliammai.

2. Her favourite pastime was to stand at the front doorway of her house and see what was happening in the street outside.

3. She would watch the bus that passed every half an hour from her village to the nearest town.

4. She developed a desire to ride the bus and found out the details of the bus journey.

5. Valli planned her visit to the town just six miles from her village by saving sixty paise for the fare.

6. On the way to the town, Valli saw a frightened cow running right in front of the bus. She clapped gleefully as the cow ran faster.

7. Valli did not get off the bus at the town. She did not want to go to the stall and have a drink because she had no money.

8. On the return journey, she saw the same cow lying dead by the roadside. This unpleasant sight made her very sad.

9. The bus reached the village at three forty. She got off the bus and reached her home.

10. Her mother did not come to know about her journey.

जब बस वल्ली के गाँव पहुँचती है वह बस से उतरकर सीधे अपने घर में प्रवेश करती है। उस समय उसकी माँ उसकी मौसी से बात कर रही थी। वह साउथ ब्लॉक से उनके यहाँ आई थी वह वल्ली से पूछती है तुम कहाँ थी? वल्ली केवल मुस्करा देती है। उसकी माँ उनसे बात करने में व्यस्त थी। दोनों बाहरी दुनिया की चीजों के बारे में बात कर रहे थे तब वल्ली बोल उठती है बाहर ऐसी बहुत सी घटनाएँ होती हैं जिसकी हमें जानकारी नहीं होती है। उसकी मौसी वल्ली की ऐसी बात सुनकर आश्चर्य चकित हो जाती है और कहती है कैसे बड़ों की तरह बातें करती है।

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

1. Who is the author of the lesson "Madam rides the Bus"?

- (A) Gavin Maxwell
- (B) Vallikkannan
- (C) Paulo Coelho
- (D) Arup Kumar Dutta

Ans. (B)

2. Valliammai was a — year old girl.

- (A) eight (B) five
- (C) seven (D) ten

Ans. (A)

3. Town was — miles from the village.

- (A) Five (B) Ten

- (C) Six (D) Three

Ans. C)

4. What amused Valli the most?

- (A) The sight of buffalo running in front of the bus.
- (B) The sight of people running in front of the bus.
- (C) The sight of a dog running in front of the bus.
- (D) The sight of a cow running in front of the bus.

Ans. (D)

5. She had to make careful and elaborate plans for

- (A) her first journey
- (B) her beautiful dress
- (C) her doll
- (D) her ice cream

Ans. A)

6. The word 'fascinating' means

- (A) recreative
- (B) everlasting
- (C) attractive
- (D) longingly

Ans. C)

7. What would make Valli jealous?

- (A) strangers travelling by bus

- (B) hearing stories of her friend's bus journey
- (C) her mother travelling the bus
- (D) all of the above

Ans. (B)

8. What does the line 'gradually a tiny wish crept into her head and grew there', mean?

- (A) The wish developed in her head over a period of time.
- (B) The wish was a feeling of wanting to prove her strength.
- (C) The wish was planted in her head by someone's suggestion.
- (D) The wish was small and was overpowered by a sense of doubt.

Ans. (A)

9. Who was a "real chatterbox"?

- (A) Valli
- (B) conductor
- (C) her aunt
- (D) all of the above

Ans. (C)

10. "Valli would stare wistfully at the people who got on or off the bus." What is the meaning of wistfully?

- (A) fearfully
- (B) carefully
- (C) willingly
- (D) longingly

Ans. D)

SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

1. What was Valli's favourite pastime?

Ans: Valli's favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house, watching what was happening in the street outside. There were no playmates of her own age on her street, and this was about all she had to do.

2. What was a source of unending joy for Valli? What was her strongest desire?

Ans. The sight of the bus which used to travel between her village and the nearest town and be filled each time with a new set of passengers was a source of unending joy for Valli.

Her strongest desire was to ride on that bus, even if just once.

3. What did Valli find out about the bus journey? How did she find out these details?

Ans. Valli found out that the bus journey to the town took 45 minutes and the two-way fare was 60 paise.

She found out these details by listening carefully to the conversations between her neighbours and people who regularly used the bus and asking a few questions here and there.

4. What do you think Valli was planning to do?

Ans. Valli was planning to go to the town and then return back by the same bus. The fare was 30 paise one way and the ride took forty five minutes. In this way, she planned that she would be back by 2:45 pm if she took the bus at 1:00 pm.

5. Why does the conductor call Valli 'madam'?

Ans. The conductor called Valli 'madam' because she behaved like a woman. She declined his help and was very quick in her answers to the conductor's questions. This made the conductor call her madam.

6. Why does Valli stand up on the seat? What does she see now?

Ans. Valli wants to look outside the bus. She finds her view blocked by the canvas blind that covers the lower part of the window. In order to have a better view she stands up on the seat and peers over the blind. She sees a canal, palm trees, grassland, mountains, green fields and the sky.

7. What does Valli tell the elderly man when he calls her a child?

Ans. Valli tells the elderly man that there is nobody there who is a child. She says she has paid her fare of thirty paise like everyone else.

8. Why didn't Valli want to make friends with the elderly woman?

Ans. Valli did not want to make friends with the elderly woman because she looked quite repulsive. She had big holes in her ear lobes, and was wearing ugly earrings. Apart from this, she was chewing betel and her mouth was also filled with betel juice.

9. How did Valli save up money for her first journey? Was it easy for her?

Ans. Valli had very painstakingly saved every stray coin that came her way by resisting every temptation to buy peppermints, toys, balloons, etc. It had been very difficult for her. Even at the village fair she resisted the temptation to be on the merry-go-round. Thus, she had been able to save sixty paise for her first bus journey.

10. What did Valli see on her way that made her laugh?

Ans. Valli saw a young cow, tail high in the air running very fast right in the middle of the road in front of the bus. The driver sounded

his horn again and again so that the cow could move away. But the more he honked, the more frightened the animal became and the faster it galloped. This all seemed very funny to Valli and she laughed and laughed till there were tears in her eyes.

11. Why didn't she get off the bus at the bus station?

Ans. Valli didn't get off the bus on reaching the town because she only boarded the bus in order to take a ride to and from the nearby town.

12. Why didn't Valli want to go to the stall and have a drink? What does this tell you about her?

Ans. Valli was too afraid to get off the bus alone. Moreover, she didn't have enough money to buy herself a drink. Therefore, she didn't intend to go to the stall for a drink. This shows that Valli was a responsible and careful child who was aware that getting off the bus without an adult could get her in trouble.

THE TALE OF CUSTARD THE DRAGON

Ogden Nash

INTRODUCTION

The Tale of Custard the Dragon is an amusing poem written in the form of a ballad. A ballad is a narrative poem in short stanzas usually having four lines.

Ballads narrate tales of heroism and courage. This poem also reveals the heroism of a dragon, but it is written in a light vein to show that appearances are deceptive. In its humorous treatment of the subject, the poem resembles a parody.

SUMMARY OF THE POEM

The Tale of Custard the Dragon" narrates the story of Belinda, her pet dragon called Custard, and a few of her other pets.

Belinda lived in a little white house with several pets. She had a black kitten called Ink, a grey mouse called Blink, a yellow dog - Mustard, and a small dragon whom she called Custard. She possessed a red coloured wagon also.

Custard, the dragon had a very horrifying appearance. It had big sharp teeth, spikes all over its back and scales underneath its belly. Its big mouth resembled a fireplace and the nose looked like a chimney. It also had sharp toes like daggers. But Custard was considered to be a coward by Belinda as well as her other pets, as he always wished to be enclosed in a nice and safe cage.

Belinda as well as her pets claimed to be very brave and bold. Belinda's strength was compared to the ferocity of a barrel full of bears. Her kitten and mouse chased the lions away. Mustard's bravery reminded one of a tiger in a fit of temper.

Belinda used to tickle Custard ruthlessly, and the kitten, the mouse and the dog ridiculed him by comparing him with “Percival”, the brave knight of King Arthur who was renowned for his strength and fighting prowess. Sitting in the red wagon, all of them made fun of this dragon.

Suddenly their fun was interrupted when a bearded pirate with an artificial leg climbed into the white house. They all were startled to see the intruder with a pistol in each hand and a short and broad sword caught between his teeth.

Each one of those present in the room was terrified. Belinda turned pale and cried for help. Mustard ran for his life, Ink fled into the basement and Blink hid himself in a rat hole.

Custard, on the other hand, faced the crisis very boldly and lashing his tail, he charged at the pirate. Absolutely frightened by this fierce assault, the pirate drank a few mouthfuls of grog (an alcoholic drink) that he was carrying. He then fired two shots at Custard but in his nervousness he missed his aim. Custard did not spare him; he ate up the whole of his body.

There was great rejoicing in the white house. Belinda embraced Custard and the other pets also started celebrating. No one bothered about the pirate's death.

However, rather than feeling ashamed of their cowardice, Ink, Blink and Mustard again started boasting of their

bravery. They claimed that they could have been braver than Custard, had they not been unnerved by the sudden turn of events. Ignoring their bragging, Custard admitted that everyone was braver than him.

Belinda continues to live in her white house along with her pets till today. Ironically, they still claim to be brave and full of courage. Custard too continues his demand for a nice and safe cage.

SUMMARY IN HINDI

द टेल ऑफ़ कस्टर्ड द ड्रैगन” बेलिंडा, कस्टर्ड नामक उसके पालतू अजगर और उसके कुछ अन्य पालतू जानवरों की कहानी बताती है।

बेलिंडा एक छोटे से सफेद घर में कई पालतू जानवरों के साथ रहती थी। उसके पास इंक नामक एक काली बिल्ली का बच्चा था, एक ग्रे चूहा जिसे ब्लिंक कहा जाता था, एक पीला कुत्ता - सरसों, और एक छोटा अजगर जिसे वह कस्टर्ड कहती थी। उसके पास लाल रंग का एक वैगन भी था।

कस्टर्ड, अजगर का रूप बहुत ही भयानक था। उसके बड़े नुकीले दांत थे, उसकी पीठ पर नुकीले नुकीले और पेट के नीचे शल्क थे। इसका बड़ा मुंह चिमनी जैसा और नाक चिमनी की तरह लग रहा था। इसमें खंजर की तरह नुकीले पैर की उंगलियां भी थीं। लेकिन कस्टर्ड को बेलिंडा के साथ-साथ उसके अन्य पालतू जानवरों द्वारा कायर माना जाता था, क्योंकि वह हमेशा एक अच्छे और सुरक्षित पिंजरे में बंद रहना चाहता था।

बेलिंडा के साथ-साथ उसके पालतू जानवरों ने बहुत बहादुर और बोल्ड होने का दावा किया। बेलिंडा की ताकत की तुलना भालुओं

से भरे बैरल की ताकत से की गई थी। उसके बिल्ली के बच्चे और चूहे ने शेरों को भगा दिया। सरसों की बहादुरी ने गुस्से में एक बाघ की याद दिला दी।

बेलिंडा कस्टर्ड को बेरहमी से गुदगुदी करती थी, और बिल्ली का बच्चा, चूहे और कुत्ते ने उसकी तुलना “पर्सिवल” से की, जो राजा आर्थर के बहादुर शूरवीर थे, जो अपनी ताकत और युद्ध कौशल के लिए प्रसिद्ध थे। रेड वैगन में बैठे सभी ने इस अजगर का मजाक उड़ाया।

अचानक उनकी मस्ती में रुकावट आई जब एक कृत्रिम पैर वाला दाढ़ी वाला समुद्री डाकू व्हाइट हाउस में चढ़ गया। प्रत्येक हाथ में एक पिस्तौल और उसके दांतों के बीच एक छोटी, चौड़ी तलवार पकड़े हुए घुसपैठिए को देखकर वे सभी चौंक गए।

कमरे में मौजूद सभी लोग डरे हुए थे। बेलिंडा पीला पड़ गया और मदद के लिए रोने लगा। सरसों अपनी जान बचाने के लिए भागी, स्याही तहखाने में भाग गई और ब्लिंक ने खुद को चूहे के छेद में छिपा लिया।

दूसरी ओर, कस्टर्ड ने बहुत साहसपूर्वक संकट का सामना किया और अपनी पूंछ को चाबुक से मारते हुए समुद्री डाकू पर आरोप लगाया। इस भीषण हमले से पूरी तरह भयभीत होकर, समुद्री डाकू ने कुछ मुट्ठी भर ग्रीक (एक मादक पेय) पी लिया जो वह ले जा रहा था। इसके बाद उन्होंने कस्टर्ड पर दो गोलियां चलाईं लेकिन घबराहट में वे अपना निशाना चूक गए। कस्टर्ड ने उसे नहीं छोड़ा; उसने अपना सारा शरीर खा लिया।

व्हाइट हाउस में बड़ी खुशी थी। बेलिंडा ने कस्टर्ड को गले लगा लिया और दूसरे पालतू जानवर भी जश्न मनाने लगे। समुद्री लुटेरों की मौत की किसी को परवाह नहीं थी।

हालाँकि, अपनी कायरता पर शर्म महसूस करने के बजाय, स्याही, पलक और सरसों ने फिर से अपनी बहादुरी का दावा करना शुरू कर दिया। उन्होंने दावा किया कि वे कस्टर्ड से भी बहादुर हो सकते थे, अगर वे अचानक हुई घटनाओं से घबराए नहीं होते। कस्टर्ड ने उनकी शेखी बघारते हुए स्वीकार किया कि हर कोई उनसे ज्यादा बहादुर है।

बेलिंडा आज भी अपने पालतू जानवरों के साथ व्हाइट हाउस में रहती है। विडंबना यह है कि वे अभी भी बहादुर और साहस से भरे होने का दावा करते हैं। कस्टर्ड भी एक अच्छे और सुरक्षित पिंजरे की अपनी मांग जारी रखता है।

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

1. Who mourned over the death of the pirate?

- (a) Blink
- (b) Custard
- (c) Ink
- (d) None

Ans. (d)

2. What did the dragon cry for?

- (a) Because he was hurt.
- (b) For a new mouse
- (c) For a nice safe cage.
- (d) None of the above

Ans. (c)

3. Who was called cowardly?

- (a) Blink
- (b) Custard
- (c) Ink
- (d) Rither

Ans. (b)

4. Who was Mustard?

- (a) Belinda's little yellow rat.
- (b) Belinda's little yellow mouse.
- (c) Belinda's little yellow dog.
- (d) Belinda's little grey dragon.

Ans. (c)

5. Where did Belinda live?

- (a) in a little white house
- (b) in a little yellow house
- (c) in a little grey house
- (d) in a little pink house

Ans. (a)

6. What did Custard do to the pirate?

- (a) ate him
- (b) scared him away

(c) held him hostage

(d) None of these

Ans. (a)

7. Who did Belinda tease?

- (a) kitten (b) mouse
- (c) dragon (d) dog

Ans. (c)

8. What does the dragon possess?

- (a) big sharp teeth
- (b) spikes on top of him
- (c) sharp toes
- (d) All of the above

Ans. (d)

9. Who is described as the most timid of all?

- (a) kitten (b) mouse
- (c) dragon (d) dog

Ans. (c)

10. What was the name of the black kitten?

- (a) Custard
- (b) ink
- (c) blink
- (d) mustard

Ans. (b)

IMPORTANT WORD NOTES

WORDS	MEANINGS
kitten	बिल्ली का बच्चा
Blink	पलक झपकना
Sharp	तेज़
Coward	कायर व्यक्ति
Spike	नोकदार चीज़
Scale	शल्क
Dagger	भाला, कटार
Rage	गुस्सा
Tickle	गुदगुदी करना
Rudely	बेरुखी से
Unmerciful	बेरहम
Wagon	गाड़ी
Giggle	खिलखिलाना
Nasty sound	अप्रिय ध्वनि
Growl	गुर्राना
Pirate	समुद्री डाकू
Dungeon	काल कोठरी
Embrace	गले लगाना
Flustered	घबराया हुआ

SUBJECTIVE QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

1. Why did Custard cry for a nice safe cage? Why is the dragon called a “cowardly dragon”?

Ans. Custard cried for a nice safe cage because it was a coward and was scared very easily. It is called “cowardly dragon” because everyone else in the house is very brave while the dragon is the only one, who fears a lot and looks for a nice safe cage for himself.

2. “Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful...” Why?

Ans. Tickling always works on people, who are a little softer. So, Belinda tickled the dragon unmercifully as it worked a lot on him. Despite being a dragon, a tickling could disturb him and this showed his cowardice at which everyone laughed.

3. Do you find ‘The Tale of Custard the Dragon’ to be a serious or a light-hearted poem? Give reasons to support your answer.

Ans. The Tale of Custard the Dragon’ is a very light and funny poem meant to be enjoyed by everyone. The way the poem has been written with a fixed rhyme scheme, makes it very easy and enjoyable to read. The poet has even used wrong spelling to maintain the rhyme scheme.

The features of Belinda and her pets described in the poem make it quite funny. Belinda’s bravery has been compared to a barrel full of bears, a liquid substance. All the tiny creatures such as the kitten and the mouse have been shown so brave that they can scare a lion and the dog’s bravery is like a tiger’s rage. The biggest of them all, the dragon is the only one, who has been shown as a coward and soft being, who looks for a cage for himself, which is very ironic, hence making the poem funny.