

**Prose: The Banyan Tree**

**A. II**. **Answer the following with reference to the context.**

**1. From my seat in the tree, I had a grandstand view of the fight.”**

**a. Where is the boy sitting during the fight?**

The boy is sitting in the banyan tree.

**b. What does the boy have a view of from the tree?**

The boy had a view of the mongoose-cobra fight.

**c. Why is the banyan tree a good place to watch the fight?**

The banyan tree is high and safe, giving the boy a clear, elevated view of the fight below without being in danger, like a grandstand at a sports event.

**d. How does the boy’s view from the tree affect his understanding of the fight?**

The boy’s high view from the banyan tree lets him see every move of the mongoose and cobra clearly, helping him understand their strategies and the intensity of nature’s survival battles.

**III. Question and Answer**

**1. Describe the banyan tree. Why was it a special place for the boy in the story?**

The banyan tree, is large with sprawling branches and aerial roots, creating a shaded, magical space. For the boy, it was special because it was his hideout where he could observe nature, read books, and witness events like the mongoose-cobra fight. Its vast canopy made it a perfect spot for adventure and solitude.

**2. The squirrel trusts the boy. What does this tell you about the boy’s character, and how does it influence his actions in the story?**

The squirrel’s trust shows the boy is kind, patient, and gentle, as he earns it by offering food and not harming the animal. This reflects his caring nature and love for animals. His character influences his

actions, as he spends time observing wildlife without disturbing them, like during the mongoose-cobra fight. He respects nature’s balance, choosing to watch rather than interfere, which shows maturity and empathy for a student.

**3 How does the mongoose-cobra fight teach the boy a lesson about life? Relate it to a real-life situation.**

The mongoose-cobra fight teaches the boy about survival, courage, and the natural balance of life, as the mongoose’s bravery defeats the cobra’s strength. He learns that determination can overcome danger. In real life, this is like facing a tough school project: with effort and persistence, like the mongoose, a student can overcome challenges, even if they seem as scary as a cobra. This lesson encourages the boy to be brave and respect nature’s rules.

**4. Do you think that the future generations will also be able to enjoy the plant and animal life around them in the years to come? Why and Why not?**

**B. II**. **Answer the following with reference to the context.**

**1. The banyan tree was older than the house, older than Grandfather, as old as the town itself.**

**a. What does the line say about the age of the banyan tree?**

The banyan tree is older than the house, Grandfather, and the town.

**b. Where does the boy spend most of his time in the story?**

The boy spends most of his time in the banyan tree.

**c. Why do you think the banyan tree’s age makes it special for the boy?**

The banyan tree’s age makes it special because its ancient, sprawling structure feels magical and timeless, offering the boy a unique place to hide, observe nature, and feel connected to something grand and enduring.

**d. How does the description of the banyan tree set the mood of the story?**

The banyan tree’s old age creates a mood of wonder and mystery, as its vast branches suggest a place full of stories and secrets, making the boy’s adventures exciting and the setting feel alive.

**2. “The squirrel became friendly when I gave him bits of cake and biscuits.”**

**a. What animal is mentioned in the line?**

The squirrel is mentioned in the line.

**b. What did the boy give the squirrel to eat?**

Bits of cake and biscuits.

**c. How did the squirrel’s behaviour change after the boy fed it?**

The squirrel became friendly, trusting the boy enough to take food from his hands and later bringing its family to the banyan tree, showing a bond of trust.

**d. What does this line tell us about the boy’s relationship with animals?**

The line shows the boy is kind and patient, as he builds a friendship with the squirrel by offering food, reflecting his love for animals and ability to connect with nature.

**3. “The mongoose was a superb fighter, quick and clever.”**

**a. What animal is described as a superb fighter?**

The mongoose is described as a superb fighter.

**b. What two qualities describe the mongoose in the line?**

      Quick and clever.

**c. How do the mongoose’s qualities help it in the fight?**

The mongoose’s quickness allows it to dodge the cobra’s strikes, and its cleverness helps it attack strategically, making it a strong opponent in the fight.

**d. Why might the boy admire the mongoose’s qualities in the story?**

The boy admires the mongoose’s quickness and cleverness because they show bravery and skill in defeating the dangerous cobra, teaching him about courage and survival in nature.

**4. “The cobra reared up, hissing, its hood spread wide.”**

**a. What does the cobra do in the line?**

The cobra rears up and hisses**.**

**b. What part of the cobra spreads wide in the line?**

Its hood.

**c. How does the cobra’s action make the fight scene more intense?**

The cobra rearing up and hissing with its hood spread creates a threatening image, showing its anger and danger, which heightens the tension of the fight with the mongoose.

**d. What might the boy feel watching the cobra’s actions?**

The boy might feel scared and excited watching the cobra’s actions, as its aggressive hissing and hood-spreading signal danger, making the fight thrilling from his safe spot in the tree.

**II. Question and answer**

1. **The squirrel is likely shown. How did the boy and the squirrel become friends in the story?**

    The boy and the squirrel became friends when the boy offered it food, like peanuts, and the squirrel grew comfortable with him. It even took food from his hands and later brought its family to the tree. Their friendship was built on trust and regular interaction.

**2. Describe mongoose and its appearance and role in the story.**

   The mongoose is small, sleek, with a bushy tail and quick movements. In the story, it plays a heroic role by fighting and defeating a cobra to protect itself. The boy watches this thrilling battle from the banyan tree, amazed by the mongoose’s bravery.

**3. What are three characteristics of the cobra as described in the story?**

    The cobra is described as long, black, and shiny with a hood that spreads when it is angry or threatened. It is aggressive, striking repeatedly during its fight with the mongoose. Its dangerous nature makes the battle intense and exciting for the boy.

**4. How does the boy’s observation post in the banyan tree help him learn about nature?**

    The banyan tree’s high branches, as shown, give the boy a vantage point to watch animals like the squirrel, mongoose, and cobra. He learns about their behaviours, survival instincts, and interactions, like the mongoose-cobra fight, which teaches him about the struggle for survival in nature.

**5. What role does the squirrel play in the story, possibly shown, and why is it significant?**

    The squirrel, is a friendly companion to the boy. It accepts food from him and brings its family, showing trust. This friendship is significant as it teaches the boy about kindness and bonding with animals, adding warmth to his solitary time in the tree.

**6. Describe the setting of the mongoose-cobra fight as seen from the banyan tree.**

    The fight occurs in a clearing below the banyan tree, with tall grass and open space. The boy watches from a branch, seeing the mongoose and cobra circle each other. The setting is tense, with the tree providing a safe viewpoint for the boy.

**7. How does the mongoose’s behaviour reflect its bravery in the story?**

   The mongoose likely appears alert and agile. In the story, it shows bravery by fearlessly confronting the cobra, dodging its strikes, and attacking swiftly. Its courage in defeating the dangerous snake highlights its strength and survival instincts.

**8. Why does the boy not interfere in the fight between the mongoose and cobra?**

    The boy, watching from the banyan tree, does not interfere because he is high up and safe, and the fight is a natural event between wild animals. He is fascinated by the battle’s intensity, and understands it is part of nature’s cycle.

**9. How do the images help you visualize the boy’s connection with the banyan tree?**

    The images show the grand banyan tree with its wide branches and roots, illustrating its role as the boy’s haven. It visualizes his connection by depicting a place where he feels safe, observes wildlife, and enjoys solitude, making the tree central to his adventures.

**10. Imagine you are the boy in the story, sitting in the banyan tree. How would you feel watching the mongoose-cobra fight, and why?**

    As the boy in the banyan tree, I would feel a mix of excitement, fear, and awe. The fight is thrilling because the mongoose and cobra are fast and fierce. I’d be scared for the mongoose, knowing the cobra’s danger, but also amazed by nature’s raw power. The banyan tree’s safety would make me feel secure, allowing me to observe without interfering. This experience would teach me about survival and courage in the animal world.

**11. If the mongoose had lost the fight to the cobra, how might the story’s ending change? Explain your reasoning.**

    If the mongoose had lost to the cobra, the story’s ending would be darker. The boy might feel scared or sad, realizing the danger of the cobra now ruling the area near the banyan tree. He might avoid the tree for safety, losing his favourite spot. The story’s tone would shift from awe at nature’s balance to fear of its dangers, teaching the boy a harsher lesson about survival where the stronger predator wins.

**12. Why do you think Ruskin Bond chose a banyan tree as the main setting instead of another place, like a house or garden?**

   Ruskin Bond chose the banyan tree, because its vast, sprawling structure symbolizes nature’s grandeur and mystery, perfect for a child’s imagination. Unlike a house or garden, the tree’s height and branches offer a unique vantage point for the boy to observe wildlife, like the squirrel and the mongoose-cobra fight. It represents freedom, solitude, and a connection to nature, making it an ideal setting to explore themes of adventure and observation.

**13. If you could add another animal to the story, as depicted in the images, what would it be, and how would it interact with the boy or the banyan tree?**

  I would add a parrot to the story, perched on the banyan tree. It could interact with the boy like the squirrel, becoming his friend by mimicking his words or eating fruit he offers. The parrot might warn him of dangers, like the cobra, adding excitement. Its colourful presence would make the tree more lively, teaching the boy about communication and alertness in nature, enhancing his connection to the wildlife around him.

**14. Analyse how the banyan tree acts as a symbol in the story. What does it represent for the boy and the reader?**

   The banyan tree symbolizes a safe haven, growth, and connection to nature. For the boy, it’s a place of solitude where he reads, observes animals like the squirrel and mongoose, and learns life lessons, like during the cobra fight. Its vast branches represent protection and wisdom. For readers, it symbolizes childhood curiosity and the beauty of nature, encouraging them to explore and respect their environment.