

A SHORT MONSOON DIARY

NEW WORDS

•Bobbing	moving up and down
•Upright	straight
•Crevices	narrow opening
•Burrows	holes
•Blunders	commits a mistake
•Admonish	scolds
•Altitudes	heights

SUMMARY

The writer, Ruskin Bond, in this diary tells about the nature of miracles and life's little joys and regrets. June 24 was the first day of monsoon mist. The mist was saddening. It concealed the hills and spread silence. The birds stopped singing suddenly. June 25 brought early monsoon rain. It became warm and humid. The mist afforded some privacy also. A boy asked him to describe the hill station and the valley. Ruskin only said that it could have been a paradise.

The rain marked the arrival of animals like leopard and thousands of leeks. The leopard lifted a dog from the servant's quarter below the school. Since the rains were there, the insect-eating birds had no dearth of food. All night on August 2, the rain drummed on the tin roof. But there was no shower, no thunder.

On August 3, the rain stopped. The whistling thrush sang. On August 12, there was endless rain and permanent mist. The writer had nowhere to go. He only looked out of the window. On August 31, snakes and rodents rushed out of their flooded holes. They took shelter in roofs and godowns. The grandmother told the children not to kill the chuchunders, i. e. moles because it brought

Brought money. By October 3, the monsoon rain made way for the winter rain and snow at higher altitude. A hailstorm in the evening hit the place. The poet was quite alone in the house. He was very lonely and quiet. He heard only the rhythm of rain. It enveloped the house. The trees looked not green but dreadful.

By March end, the winter also ended. Mussoories had black clouds over it. It hailed half an hour. When it cleared the sky, a rainbow was formed across it.

Comprehension Check

1. Why is the author not able to see Bijju?

The author could not see Bijju because of the mist that concealed the hills. So he could hear the voice of Bijju but not see him.

2. What are the two ways in which the hills appear to change when the mist comes up?

When the mist comes up, the hills appear to change. All the birds sitting on the hills fall silent when the mist comes climbing up the hill. When the mist comes up, it conceals not only the hills but blankets them in silence also.

1. When does the monsoon season begin and when does it end? How do you prepare to face the monsoon?

The monsoon enters India from east and south somewhere around mid of May. It reaches northern part of the country around second week of June. The monsoon ends around September. We take out our rain coats and umbrellas to face the monsoon.

2. Which hill-station does the author describe in this diary entry?

In this diary entry, the author describes the beauty of the lovely hill station named Mussoorie.

3. For how many days does it rain without stopping? What does the author do on these days

It rained without stopping for eight or nine days. Since there was nowhere to go, the author paced in his room and looked out of the window at a few bobbing umbrellas.

4. Where do the snakes and rodents take shelter? Why

The snakes and rodents take shelter in roofs, attics and godowns in order to save themselves from rain water.

5. What did the author receive in the mail

The author received a cheque in the mail

Working with Text

1. Look carefully at the diary entries for June 24-25, August 2 and March 23. Now write down the changes that happen as the rains progress from June to March.

June 24 is the first day of monsoon mist. The hills are concealed by the mist. It blankets the hills with a cover of silence. The real monsoon shower comes on June 25. The whole nature welcomes it. The first cobra lily rears its head from the ferns. By August 2, the people become weary of the monsoon. There is no storm, no thunder, just a steady tropical downpour. People keep in their houses and enjoy the sound of raindrops falling on their roofs. Snakes and rodents take shelter in roofs, attics and godowns. March 23 heralds the end of winter. The sky starts to become clear after a hailstorm. And a rainbow starts forming in the clear sky. One can enjoy this sight of rainbow which shows the beauty of nature.

2. Why did the grandmother ask the children not to kill the Chuchundar?

The grandmother asked the children not to kill the Chuchundar because it was considered lucky. She said that it brought money.

3. What signs do we find in Nature which show that the monsoons are about to end?

Wild balsam, dahlias, begonias and ground orchids begin to appear. The seeds of cobra lily are turning red. These signs show that the monsoons are about to end.

4. Complete the following sentences.

Answer

- (i) Biju is not seen but his voice is heard because of the mist in the surroundings.
- (ii) The writer describes the hill station and valley as a paradise that might have been.
- (iii) The leopard was successful in attacking one of Biju's cows but had to flee when Biju's mother came screaming curses.
- (iv) The minivets are easily noticed because of their bright colours.
- (v) It looks like a fashion display on the slopes when ground orchids, mauve lady's slipper and the white butterfly orchids bloom.
- (vi) During the monsoon season, snakes and rodents are found in roofs and attics because they have been flooded out of their holes and burrows.

5. 'Although tin roofs are given to springing unaccountable leaks, there is a feeling of being untouched by, and yet in touch with, the rain.'

- (i) Why has the writer used the word, 'springing'?
- (ii) How is the writer untouched by the rain?
- (iii) How is the writer in touch with the rain at the same time?

(i) The word 'springing' means 'to develop suddenly'. The writer says that tin roofs are prone to developing unexpected leaks.

(ii) The writer was physically untouched by the rain as the tin roof stopped the rain from leaking in.

(iii) The writer was in touch with the rain at the same time because he could feel the rain by listening to its drumming sound on the corrugated tin roof.

6. Mention a few things that can happen when there is endless rain for days together.

When there is endless rain for days together, everything becomes damp and soggy. There is no place for anybody to go to. The hillsides are lush as late monsoon flowers such as wild balsam, dahlias, begonias and ground orchids begin to appear.

7. What is the significance of cobra lily in relation to the monsoon season, its beginning and end?

When monsoon begins, the first cobra lily appears from the ferns. When the seeds of the cobra lily turn red, it signifies that the monsoon is coming to an end.

Working with Language

2. Put the verbs in the brackets into their proper forms. The first one is done for you.

- (i) We (get out) of the school bus. The bell (ring) and everyone (rush) to class.
- (ii) The traffic (stop). Some people (sit) on the road and they (shout) slogans.
- (iii) I (wear) my raincoat. It (rain) and people (get) wet.
- (iv) She (see) a film. She (narrate) it to her friends who (listen) carefully.
- (v) We (go) to the exhibition. Some people (buy) clothes while others (play) games.
- (vi) The class (is) quiet. Some children (read) books and the rest (draw).

Answer

- (i) We got out of the school bus. The bell was ringing and everyone was rushing to Class.
- (ii) The traffic stopped. Some people were sitting on the road and they were shouting slogans.
- (iii) I wore my raincoat. It was raining and people were getting wet.
- (iv) She saw a film. She was narrating it to her friends who were listening carefully.
- (v) We went to the exhibition. Some people were buying clothes while others were playing games.
- (vi) The Class was quiet. Some children were reading books and the rest were drawing.

3. (i) Match these words with their correct meaning

Answer

- (a) to fall in small drops – drip
- (b) to make a sound by hitting a surface repeatedly – drum
- (c) to move quickly through the air, making a soft sound – swish
- (d) harsh sound made by birds – caw
- (e) ringing sound (of a bell or breaking glass, etc.) – tinkle

(ii) Now fill in the blanks using the correct form of the words given above.

answer

- (a) Ramesh drummed on his desk in impatience.
- (b) Rain water dripped from the umbrella all over the carpet.
- (c) The pony swished its tail.
- (d) The tinkling of breaking glass woke me up.
- (e) The cawing of the raven disturbed the child's sleep.

Complete each sentence below by using appropriate phrase from the ones given below.

Answer

- (i) I saw thick black clouds in the sky. And sure enough it started raining heavily.
- (ii) The blue umbrella was big enough for the brother and sister.
- (iii) The butterflies are colourful enough to get noticed.

- (iv) The lady was brave enough to chase the leopard.
- (v) The boy was anxious enough to call out to his sister.
- (vi) The man was kind enough to offer help.
- (vii) The victim's injury was serious enough for him to get admitted in hospital.
- (viii) That person was foolish enough to repeat the same mistake again.
- (ix) He told me he was sorry and he would compensate for the loss. I said, 'fair enough.'