

Class X - English

**A Tiger in the Zoo**

# CBSE NOTES

## **A Tiger in the Zoo - Mastery Worksheet**

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# Mastery Questions

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## 1. Compare and contrast the life of a tiger in the zoo with its life in the wild, as depicted in the poem.

*Hint: Focus on the tiger's actions and the poet's descriptions in both settings.*

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**Solution:** In the zoo, the tiger is confined to a small cage, moving quietly in 'vivid stripes' with 'quiet rage', symbolizing suppressed anger and frustration. Its movements are limited to 'the few steps of his cage'. In contrast, in the wild, the tiger would be 'lurking in shadow', 'sliding through long grass', and 'terrorising the village', showcasing its natural behavior and freedom. The poem uses these contrasts to highlight the unnatural confinement of the tiger in the zoo versus its majestic, free existence in the jungle.

## 2. Analyze the use of imagery in 'A Tiger in the Zoo' to convey the tiger's emotions and situation.

*Hint: Look for sensory details and contrasts in the poem.*

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**Solution:** The poem employs vivid imagery to depict the tiger's plight. Phrases like 'pads of velvet quiet' and 'quiet rage' use tactile and emotional imagery to show the tiger's suppressed strength and anger. The contrast between the 'concrete cell' and the 'jungle's edge' uses visual imagery to highlight the unnatural vs. natural habitats. The 'brilliant eyes' staring at 'brilliant stars' symbolizes the tiger's longing for freedom and connection with its natural environment.

## 3. Discuss the significance of the tiger's 'quiet rage' in the poem. How does it reflect on human actions?

*Hint: Consider the emotional and ethical implications of the tiger's captivity.*

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**Solution:** The 'quiet rage' of the tiger symbolizes its suppressed anger and frustration due to captivity. This reflects on human actions by criticizing the confinement of wild animals for entertainment, stripping them of their natural instincts and freedom. The poem suggests that such actions lead to suffering and a loss of dignity for the animals, urging a reconsideration of human behavior towards wildlife.

#### 4. How does the poet use contrast between the tiger's current and potential life to emphasize his message?

*Hint: Focus on the 'should be' scenarios the poet presents.*

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**Solution:** The poet contrasts the tiger's confined life in the zoo with its potential life in the wild to emphasize the theme of freedom vs. captivity. The tiger's 'stalking' in the cage versus 'sliding through long grass' in the jungle highlights the unnaturalness of zoos. This contrast serves to critique human interference in nature and the moral implications of keeping wild animals in captivity.

#### 5. Examine the role of the setting in 'A Tiger in the Zoo'. How does it contribute to the poem's overall theme?

*Hint: Analyze how each setting influences the tiger's behavior and the poem's mood.*

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**Solution:** The setting shifts between the zoo and the jungle, serving as a backdrop to contrast confinement with freedom. The zoo, with its 'concrete cell' and 'bars', symbolizes oppression and loss of natural instincts, while the jungle represents the tiger's true home where it can live freely. This stark contrast reinforces the poem's theme of the unnaturalness of captivity and the importance of preserving wildlife in their natural habitats.

#### 6. Interpret the line 'He hears the last voice at night, The patrolling cars,' in the context of the poem.

*Hint: Consider the sounds the tiger would hear in the wild versus the zoo.*

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**Solution:** This line signifies the tiger's awareness of human presence even at night, highlighting its constant surveillance and lack of privacy in the zoo. The 'patrolling cars' symbolize human control and the artificial environment the tiger is subjected to, contrasting with the natural sounds it would experience in the wild. This reinforces the poem's critique of zoos as places of confinement rather than conservation.

#### 7. What does the tiger staring at the 'brilliant stars' signify?

*Hint: Think about what the stars represent in contrast to the tiger's cage.*

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**Solution:** The tiger staring at the 'brilliant stars' signifies its longing for freedom and connection with the vast, untamed universe beyond its cage. This moment of contemplation contrasts with its

daytime rage, offering a glimpse into the tiger's deep yearning for its natural habitat. It symbolizes hope and the innate desire for freedom that cannot be suppressed by physical confinement.

## 8. How does the poem 'A Tiger in the Zoo' address the theme of animal rights?

*Hint: Reflect on the poet's portrayal of the tiger's emotions and situation.*

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**Solution:** The poem addresses animal rights by portraying the psychological and physical toll of captivity on the tiger. Through vivid imagery and contrasts, it critiques the ethical implications of keeping wild animals in zoos for human amusement. The poem advocates for respecting animals' natural freedoms and habitats, suggesting that confinement leads to suffering and a loss of dignity.

## 9. Compare 'A Tiger in the Zoo' with another poem about animals in captivity. How do their messages differ or align?

*Hint: Look for themes of confinement, freedom, and the animals' emotional states in both poems.*

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**Solution:** Comparing 'A Tiger in the Zoo' with 'The Panther' by Rainer Maria Rilke, both poems depict animals in captivity, focusing on their psychological suffering. However, while Leslie Norris's tiger exhibits 'quiet rage' and a longing for freedom, Rilke's panther is resigned, its 'vision... so weary that it cannot hold anything else.' Both poems critique captivity but differ in their portrayal of the animals' responses to it, highlighting different aspects of their suffering.

## 10. Discuss the effectiveness of the poem's structure in conveying its message about the tiger's captivity.

*Hint: Consider how the arrangement of stanzas and the use of contrast contribute to the poem's impact.*

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**Solution:** The poem's structure, with its alternating focus on the tiger's life in the zoo and its potential life in the wild, effectively contrasts the two realities to highlight the cruelty of captivity. The repetitive imagery of confinement versus freedom reinforces the poem's message, making the reader empathize with the tiger's plight. The concise stanzas and vivid descriptions ensure the message is both powerful and accessible.

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