

Class X - English

**A Tiger in the Zoo**

# CBSE NOTES

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

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## Practice Questions

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### 1. Describe the contrast between the tiger in the zoo and the tiger in the wild as depicted in the poem.

*Hint: Focus on the imagery and actions of the tiger in both settings to draw the contrast.*

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**Solution:** The poem 'A Tiger in the Zoo' by Leslie Norris vividly contrasts the life of a tiger in captivity with its life in the wild. In the zoo, the tiger is confined to a small cage, moving quietly in 'vivid stripes' and expressing a 'quiet rage.' Its movements are limited to 'the few steps of his cage,' and it ignores the visitors, showing its discomfort and frustration. In contrast, the tiger in the wild is depicted as a majestic and powerful creature, lurking in shadows, sliding through long grass near water holes, and terrorizing villages by snarling around houses at the jungle's edge. The poet uses these images to highlight the tiger's natural behaviors and the stark difference between its life in captivity and its life in the wild. The tiger's strength and freedom in the wild are contrasted with its confinement and helplessness in the zoo, emphasizing the poem's theme of freedom versus captivity.

### 2. How does the poet use imagery to convey the tiger's emotions in the zoo?

*Hint: Look for descriptive words and phrases that depict the tiger's feelings and surroundings.*

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**Solution:** The poet uses vivid imagery to convey the tiger's emotions in the zoo. Phrases like 'pads of velvet quiet' and 'quiet rage' suggest the tiger's suppressed anger and frustration. The 'concrete cell' and 'bars' symbolize its confinement and loss of freedom. The tiger's 'brilliant eyes' staring at the 'brilliant stars' evoke a sense of longing and sadness, as it yearns for the freedom it once had in the wild. The imagery of the tiger stalking the length of its cage and ignoring visitors further emphasizes its discomfort and alienation in the zoo. Through these images, the poet effectively communicates the tiger's emotional state, making the reader empathize with its plight.

### 3. What is the significance of the tiger's 'quiet rage' in the poem?

*Hint: Consider the tiger's behavior in the wild versus its behavior in the zoo.*

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**Solution:** The phrase 'quiet rage' signifies the tiger's suppressed anger and frustration due to its confinement in the zoo. Unlike the tiger in the wild, which can express its rage openly by snarling and terrorizing villages, the zoo tiger's rage is silent and internalized. This 'quiet rage' reflects its helplessness and inability to escape its captivity. The poet uses this phrase to highlight the

psychological impact of confinement on wild animals, suggesting that while the tiger may appear calm on the outside, it is deeply unhappy and agitated on the inside. This contrast between outward appearance and inner emotion underscores the poem's theme of the unnaturalness of keeping wild animals in captivity.

#### 4. Explain the poet's message about captivity and freedom in the poem.

*Hint: Think about the differences between the tiger's life in the wild and in the zoo.*

**Solution:** The poet's message about captivity and freedom is that wild animals, like the tiger, suffer greatly when confined to zoos. The poem contrasts the tiger's natural habitat, where it is free to roam, hunt, and express its instincts, with its life in the zoo, where it is trapped in a 'concrete cell' and its 'strength behind bars.' This contrast highlights the unnatural and cruel nature of captivity, suggesting that animals lose their essence and vitality when deprived of their freedom. The tiger's 'quiet rage' and its longing gaze at the stars further emphasize its yearning for freedom. Through this, the poet urges readers to reconsider the ethics of keeping wild animals in captivity and to appreciate their need for freedom and natural habitats.

#### 5. How does the poem 'A Tiger in the Zoo' evoke empathy for the tiger?

*Hint: Focus on the emotional language and imagery used to describe the tiger.*

**Solution:** The poem evokes empathy for the tiger by vividly depicting its suffering and longing for freedom. The imagery of the tiger's 'quiet rage,' its confinement in a 'concrete cell,' and its 'brilliant eyes' staring at the stars create a poignant picture of its plight. The contrast between its life in the wild, where it is powerful and free, and its life in the zoo, where it is helpless and confined, makes the reader feel sorry for the tiger. The poet's use of descriptive language and emotional tone further enhances this empathy, encouraging readers to reflect on the ethical implications of keeping wild animals in captivity. By humanizing the tiger and highlighting its emotions, the poem fosters a deep sense of compassion and understanding for its suffering.

#### 6. Discuss the role of contrast in the poem 'A Tiger in the Zoo.'

*Hint: Look for opposing images and ideas in the poem.*

**Solution:** Contrast plays a central role in the poem 'A Tiger in the Zoo' by highlighting the differences between the tiger's life in the wild and its life in captivity. The poet contrasts the tiger's natural behaviors, such as lurking in shadows and terrorizing villages, with its restricted movements

and quiet rage in the zoo. This contrast emphasizes the unnaturalness of captivity and the tiger's loss of freedom and vitality. The imagery of the tiger's 'brilliant eyes' staring at the 'brilliant stars' further contrasts its confined existence with the vastness of the natural world it longs for. Through these contrasts, the poet underscores the poem's themes of freedom versus captivity and the ethical implications of keeping wild animals in zoos.

## 7. What does the tiger's gaze at the stars symbolize in the poem?

*Hint: Consider what the stars might represent in relation to the tiger's desires.*

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**Solution:** The tiger's gaze at the stars symbolizes its longing for freedom and its connection to the natural world. The 'brilliant eyes' staring at the 'brilliant stars' suggest a deep yearning for the life it once had in the wild, where it could roam freely under the open sky. The stars represent the vastness and beauty of the natural world, contrasting sharply with the tiger's confined and artificial environment in the zoo. This imagery evokes a sense of sadness and loss, as the tiger is physically trapped but spiritually connected to its natural habitat. The poet uses this symbol to emphasize the tiger's inherent wildness and the cruelty of keeping such a majestic creature in captivity.

## 8. How does the poet describe the tiger's natural habitat in the poem?

*Hint: Focus on the actions and surroundings of the tiger in the wild.*

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**Solution:** The poet describes the tiger's natural habitat as a place of freedom, power, and natural beauty. In the wild, the tiger is depicted lurking in shadows, sliding through long grass near water holes, and terrorizing villages by snarling around houses at the jungle's edge. These images convey the tiger's strength, agility, and dominance in its natural environment. The water hole and the plump deer passing by suggest a rich and vibrant ecosystem where the tiger can hunt and thrive. This description contrasts sharply with the tiger's life in the zoo, highlighting the poem's theme of the importance of freedom and natural habitats for wild animals. The poet's vivid imagery brings the tiger's natural habitat to life, making its confinement in the zoo seem even more tragic.

## 9. What is the impact of the tiger's confinement on its behavior in the zoo?

*Hint: Consider how the tiger's actions in the zoo differ from its natural behaviors.*

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**Solution:** The impact of the tiger's confinement on its behavior in the zoo is profound. The tiger, which would naturally be a powerful and active predator in the wild, is reduced to pacing quietly in its cage, expressing a 'quiet rage.' Its movements are limited to 'the few steps of his cage,' and it

ignores the visitors, showing its disinterest and discomfort. The tiger's 'brilliant eyes' staring at the stars suggest a deep longing for freedom and a sense of alienation from its surroundings. This behavior reflects the psychological and physical toll of captivity, as the tiger's natural instincts and behaviors are suppressed. The poet uses these observations to criticize the practice of keeping wild animals in zoos, highlighting the negative effects of confinement on their well-being.

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

*Hint: Think about the poem's portrayal of the tiger's suffering and its implications for animal rights.*

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**Solution:** The poem 'A Tiger in the Zoo' addresses the theme of animal rights by highlighting the suffering and unnaturalness of keeping wild animals in captivity. Through vivid imagery and contrast, the poet shows how the tiger's life in the zoo is a far cry from its natural habitat, where it is free and powerful. The tiger's 'quiet rage,' confinement in a 'concrete cell,' and longing gaze at the stars evoke empathy and raise ethical questions about the treatment of wild animals. The poem suggests that animals have a right to live freely in their natural environments and that captivity deprives them of their essence and vitality. By humanizing the tiger and emphasizing its emotions, the poet calls for a reconsideration of how humans interact with and treat wild animals, advocating for their rights and well-being.

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