

Class X - English

Mijbil the Otter

CBSE NOTES

Mijbil the Otter - Practice Worksheet

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Practice Questions

1. Describe the initial reaction of Mijbil the otter when he first arrived at Maxwell's cottage. How did his behavior change over time?

Hint: Focus on the transition from Mijbil's initial aloofness to his eventual playful and affectionate behavior.

Solution: Initially, Mijbil was aloof and indifferent, choosing to sleep on the floor far from Maxwell's bed. Over time, he became more affectionate and playful, showing a keen interest in his surroundings. This change was marked by Mijbil starting to sleep on Maxwell's bed and engaging in playful activities like playing with water and toys. His intelligence and friendly nature became evident as he developed a bond with Maxwell, demonstrating the otter's capacity for companionship and adaptation to a new environment.

2. What challenges did Maxwell face while transporting Mijbil to England? How did he overcome them?

Hint: Consider the logistical and emotional challenges Maxwell encountered and the solutions he devised.

Solution: Maxwell faced several challenges, including airline restrictions on transporting animals, which required Mijbil to be packed into a small box. The otter's distress led to a bloody scene when Maxwell returned to find Mijbil had injured himself trying to escape. Maxwell overcame these challenges by ensuring Mijbil's comfort during the flight, with the help of a sympathetic air hostess who allowed Mijbil to sit on Maxwell's knee, showcasing the importance of compassion and quick thinking in difficult situations.

3. How does Maxwell describe Mijbil's playfulness and intelligence? Provide examples from the text.

Hint: Look for instances where Mijbil's actions demonstrate his playful nature and problem-solving skills.

Solution: Maxwell describes Mijbil as highly playful and intelligent, with a love for water and inventing games. Examples include Mijbil's joy in playing with water in the bathtub, his invention of a game involving a ping-pong ball on a sloping suitcase lid, and his ability to turn on taps. These

behaviors not only highlight Mijbil's intelligence but also his capacity for joy and creativity, endearing him to Maxwell and readers alike.

4. What does the story of Mijbil the otter teach us about the relationship between humans and animals?

Hint: Reflect on the emotional and practical aspects of Maxwell and Mijbil's relationship.

Solution: The story illustrates the deep bond that can form between humans and animals, showcasing mutual affection, understanding, and respect. Maxwell's dedication to Mijbil's well-being, despite the challenges, reflects the responsibilities of pet ownership. Mijbil's adaptability and affectionate nature demonstrate how animals can enrich human lives, offering companionship and joy. This relationship underscores the importance of empathy and care in bridging the gap between different species.

5. Why was Mijbil named 'Maxwell's otter'? What significance does this naming have?

Hint: Consider the scientific and personal implications of Mijbil's naming.

Solution: Mijbil was named 'Maxwell's otter' because he belonged to a race previously unknown to science and was christened by zoologists as *Lutrogale perspicillata maxwelli* in honor of Gavin Maxwell. This naming signifies the unique bond between Maxwell and Mijbil, as well as Mijbil's scientific importance. It highlights how personal relationships can contribute to scientific discovery and the recognition of new species.

6. Describe the reactions of the Londoners to Mijbil. What does this tell us about human perceptions of unfamiliar animals?

Hint: Analyze the variety of guesses made by Londoners and what they reveal about common knowledge of otters.

Solution: Londoners' reactions to Mijbil ranged from curiosity to confusion, with many unable to correctly identify him as an otter. Their guesses included a baby seal, squirrel, and even a walrus, reflecting a lack of familiarity with otters. This highlights how human perceptions of unfamiliar animals are often shaped by limited knowledge and stereotypes, underscoring the need for education and awareness about wildlife.

7. How did Mijbil's presence affect Maxwell's life? Discuss the emotional impact.

Hint: Focus on the emotional highs and lows Maxwell experienced with Mijbil.

Solution: Mijbil's presence brought joy, companionship, and a sense of purpose to Maxwell's life, filling the void left by his previous dog. The otter's playful antics and affectionate nature provided Maxwell with comfort and happiness, illustrating the therapeutic benefits of pet ownership. However, Mijbil also introduced challenges and responsibilities, demonstrating the complexities of caring for an exotic pet. Overall, Mijbil's impact was profoundly positive, enriching Maxwell's life emotionally.

8. What are some of the compulsive habits Mijbil developed in London? How do these habits reflect his personality?

Hint: Identify specific behaviors Mijbil exhibited in London and their significance.

Solution: Mijbil developed compulsive habits such as galloping along a low wall on his way home and engaging in playful rituals with objects. These habits reflect his intelligent, curious, and playful personality, showcasing his need for stimulation and exercise. They also demonstrate how otters, like humans, can develop routines and preferences, highlighting their complex behavioral patterns.

9. Discuss the significance of water in Mijbil's life. How does his interaction with water reveal his natural instincts?

Hint: Consider Mijbil's behaviors related to water and what they indicate about otter biology.

Solution: Water plays a central role in Mijbil's life, as seen in his joyful interactions with it, such as plunging and rolling in the bathtub. These behaviors reveal his natural instincts as an otter, a species adapted to aquatic environments. Mijbil's need to keep water moving and his inventive play with it underscore the importance of water for otters' physical and mental well-being, reflecting their innate connection to aquatic habitats.

10. How does Maxwell's narrative style contribute to the reader's understanding and appreciation of Mijbil?

Hint: Analyze how Maxwell's descriptions and storytelling techniques enhance the portrayal of Mijbil.

Solution: Maxwell's narrative style, rich in descriptive detail and emotional depth, brings Mijbil's character to life, allowing readers to visualize his antics and understand his personality. By sharing his observations and feelings, Maxwell fosters a connection between Mijbil and the reader, enhancing appreciation for the otter's uniqueness and the bond they shared. This narrative approach educates and entertains, making the story of Mijbil both informative and heartwarming.

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