



Unit-2

Supplementary

Zigzag

About the author:

Asha Nehemiah born in 1958 at Chennai has lived, studied and worked in 8 different cities and small towns and is now a resident of Bangalore. She has always been interested in writing .Her love for reading , led her to study Literature in college. If she had not been a writer, she would have been a teacher . Humour, fantasy mystery and adventure are the strong elements in her work. She loves baking, walking, reading and travelling.

GLOSSARY:

- 1.aboriginal (adj.) - native, local
- 2.sarcasm (n) - use of irony to mock or convey contempt
- 3.fringed (v) - bordered
- 4.plumage (n) - a bird's feather collectively
- 5.sludgiest (adj.) - wet mud
- 6.grumpiness (adj.) - bad tempered
- 7.squirt (n) - spray
- 8.coyote (n) - a wolf like wild dog native to North America
- 9.streaks (n) - line, strap
- 10.tantrum (n) - outburst, flare-up
- 11.crinkly (adj.) - wrinkly



Summary of the Story:

Introduction:

Author Asha Nehemiah unfolds the delicate love a bird can exhibit to the astonishment of the inmates. Interesting facts about plants and animals will draw the attention of students. Let us read the family's reaction towards the wonder bird Zigzag.

Zigzag finds new home:

Dr. Ashok T Krishnan's family shelters Somu's new pet, ZigZag, a queer-looking African bird, who is known for talking and singing in twenty-one different languages brought in by Visu after a telephonic conversation which wasn't audible due to the variety of blood-curdling yells and earsplitting sobs. Mr. Krishnan knows about Mrs. Krishnan's painting exhibition the next week and denies the plea of Somu to shelter the pet.

An Unusual Bird:

Zigzag is the most harmless, unusual and lovable bird bred by a genuine African witch doctor, who gifted it to Somu when he, being a child specialist like Dr. Krishnan cured the witch doctor's son, while he was touring the deepest jungles of Africa a month ago.

Mistaken conversation:

To Somu, the bird is an absolute treasure and a real help. However, Somu mistakes Krishnan to have agreed to the request. Their son Arvind and daughter Maya are keen in bringing the pet home. They both discuss about the unique gifts given by Uncle Somu such as the insect-eating plant, tiny pen knife with the genuine shark's tooth blade, the aboriginal boomerang and so on. But this strange guest turns out to be a disappointment for the Krishnan family.

A sleeping bird:

Zigzag does nothing but sleeps and snores all the time at home that even the neighbours complain about the noise in person and over the phone. All attempts to awaken the bird goes in vain. They finally feel a big escape to leave home and stay far away from the sound of snoring. The bird at first before resorting to a steadfast sleep eats the nuts and fruits, keeps them safe in the chandelier and the fan blades.

**Maid makes a mess:**

The maid Lakshmi shrieks when she switches on the fan in an excited manner thinking she is blessed with papayas and bananas raining inside the room not knowing the bird's play. Mbs. Krishnan is annoyed at the slice of overripe? papaya whizzing off the fan and splattering all over her unfinished masterpiece – sunset at Marina spreading streaks of gooey orange pulp and shiny black seeds all over it.

Six Frantic Days:

Dr. Krishnan leaves an e-mail message for Somu, asking him for clear instructions on how to stop Zigzag from snoring. Six frantic days of checking their e-mail day and night make them dumbstruck by the reply from Somu on the seventh day that the bird never sleeps nor snores. Mrs. Krishnan wants it to be sent to Visu as her friends and experts will come home and choose her paintings for the exhibition.

Dr. Krishnan takes it to clinic:

Krishnan takes Zigzag in the car and hopes to find Visu so that Zigzag's snore doesn't add to the din of the sobs and shrieks produced by the tiny patients waiting for him. However, Ziggy-Zagga, King-of-the- Tonga was not familiar to being kept waiting and was already making his way to the clinic where he perched himself on the nurse's reception table. Dr. Krishnan warned Zigzag fiercely as he went towards his room. Zigzag Speaks: Dr. Krishnan had barely walked through the door that separated his clinic from the waiting room when he heard a strange voice say, 'You there in the blue T-shirt, don't jump on the sofa and you in the red dress, don't swing on the curtain.' It was Zigzag's voice, clear and commanding. There was pin-drop silence in the room as everyone waited for Zigzag's next sentence. Dr. Krishnan was amazed!

Cheerful Zigzag:

Gone was Zigzag's bored and grumpy expression. Instead, the bird looked happy and alert as it went about the job it had been trained for, first with the African witch doctor and then with Dr. Somu. To top it all, Zigzag never slept nor snored. ZigZag was an absolute treasure and Dr. Krishnan never wanted Visu to take away ZigZag.



Mrs. Krishnan rewarded for the art:

Mrs. Krishnan too calls at the same time sounding very pleased with herself. She said that 'Mrs. Jhunjhunwala, the art critic did not want to exhibit 'Sunset at Marina' since she would buy it for herself, for Rs. 5,000/- for she loved my new technique of painting! She simply adored those streaky orangey bits! Dr. Krishnan rewards the bird: Dr. Krishnan gave the bird a toffee from his desk as a compliment, but he just ate the toffee, paper wrapper and all, and then lowered one crinkly eyelid in a knowing wink.

Conclusion:

Zigzag attracts Rnshnan's family after all the mess and irritating snores. It is interesting to watch the activities of a wild bird that belongs to the deepest jungles of Africa. The lesson has amazing facts about African animals and plants adding to the students delight.

A) Identify the speaker / character:

1. 'Even though I clearly said no!' Answer: Dr. Krishnan
2. 'The one that spits deadly poison straight into its opponent's eyes.'
Answer: Maya
3. 'Remember the tiny penknife he gave me last year'.
Answer: Arvind
4. 'It's Somu's thoughtless ways that reduce me to tears'
Answer: Mrs. Krishnan
5. 'Come in, Zigzag, come in dear!' Answer: Visu

B) Rearrange the following sentences in coherent order:

1. a. Their nine-year-old daughter Maya was excited about Zigzag's arrival.



- b. Mrs. Ashok was busy getting ready for the painting exhibition.
- c. Zigzag is an unusual bird that speaks in 21 different languages.
- d. Due to the commotion Somu mistook Ashok's commitment to keep zigzag.
- e. Dr. Ashok's clinic usually sounded like an ancient Chinese torture chamber.

Answers:

e, d, b, a, c

- e. Dr. Ashok's clinic usually sounded like an ancient Chinese torture chamber.
- d. Due to the commotion Somu mistook Ashok's commitment to keep zigzag.
- b. Mrs. Ashok was busy getting ready for the painting exhibition.
- a. Their nine-year-old daughter Maya was excited about Zigzag's arrival.
- c. Zigzag is an unusual bird that speaks in 21 different languages.

- 2. a. Apparently, Zigzag was bred by a genuine African witch doctor.
- b. But most of his possessions were absolute nuisances!
- c. Isn't that Uncle Somu's prized giant green-and -gold fighting beetle?
- d. Somu says the bird is an absolute treasure and a real help.
- e. Somu had cured the witch doctor's son last month.

Answers:

c, a, e, d, b

- c. Isn't that Uncle Somu's prized giant green-and -gold fighting beetle?
- a. Apparently, Zigzag was bred by a genuine African witch doctor,
- e. Somu had cured the witch doctor's son last month.
- d. Somu says the bird is an absolute treasure and a real help.
- b. But most of his possessions were absolute nuisances!