

WELLAND GOULDSMITH SCHOOL

English Literature                      Class 8

Answers

WORKSHEET

Q1) Write about the school in which Mr. Oliver taught.

Answer: The school in which Mr. Oliver taught was situated on the outskirts of the hill station of Simla. It was quite an old school which ran on English public school lines. Students mostly from wealthy families studied there and such was its reputation that the school in the Life magazine was called the 'Eton of the East'

Q2) What unusual sight did Mr. Oliver come across in the pine forest?

Answer: Every evening Mr. Oliver went for a stroll in the Simla Bazaar and while returning took the short cut route through the pine forest. One evening he came across an unusual sight. He saw a boy sitting on a rock and weeping. His head was hung down. His hands covered his face and his entire body shook in convulsions.

Q3) Answer the following with Reference to the Context:

A) "What are you doing here boy?" asked Mr. Oliver sharply moving closer so that he could recognize the miscreant.

i) Who is Mr. Oliver?

Answer: Mr. Oliver, a bachelor was an Anglo Indian teacher in a school outside Simla. It was a residential school where he had been teaching for several years.

ii) Why was he there at that time?

Answer: Every evening Mr. Oliver went for a stroll in the Simla Bazaar which was about three miles from the school. Similarly, that evening Mr. Oliver was passing through the pine forest when he came across a terrible sight of the featureless school student who was sitting and sobbing on a rock in the pine forest.

iii) Whom does Mr. Oliver address as the miscreant?

Answer: On seeing the figure of a boy sitting alone on a rock dressed in school uniform Mr. Oliver was quite taken aback. Children were not supposed to be out after dark and so he initially addressed the boy as a miscreant not abiding by the regulations of the school.

iv) What did Mr. Oliver see when the boy looked up?

Answer: The flickering light of Mr. Oliver's torch fell on the boy who was sitting and sobbing incessantly in the pine forest. Quite concerned to see a school boy in that situation Mr. Oliver approached the boy

and asked him to look up. When the boy looked up at his teacher, Mr. Oliver saw the most terrible sight. The boy's face could hardly be called a face. It had no eyes, ears, nose or mouth. It was just a round smooth head with a school cap on top of it.

B) "Do you mean it was like this Sahib?"

i) Who has been addressed as Sahib in the above lines and by whom?

Answer: Mr. Oliver, an Anglo Indian teacher of an old residential school in Simla, who is also the main protagonist of the story 'A Face in the Dark' has been addressed as 'Sahib' in the above lines by the watchman of the school where he taught.

ii) In what state does the speaker find his Sahib?

Answer: Having experienced a terrible incident in the pine forest Mr. Oliver turned around and ran for his life towards the school building. While running, he stumbled upon the school watchman who saw that Mr. Oliver was gasping for breath and was in a nervous condition. This was quite unexpected from a bold and courageous person like Mr. Oliver.

iii) What does he mean when he says 'like this Sahib?'

Answer: As Mr. Oliver reached the school premises he stumbled upon the school watchman. Seeing him in such a breathless condition he asked Mr. Oliver why he was running and whether he had been in some sort of accident. When Mr. Oliver told him about the terrible apparition he saw in the pine forest, the watchman lifted up his lantern and disclosed his face before Mr. Oliver. He then asked if Mr. Oliver had seen something like his own face which too Mr. Oliver found to be incidentally same. Soon the wind blew the lamp out.

Q4) Justify the title of the story 'A Face in the Dark'.

Answer: A face in the dark is a supernatural story that revolves around the experience of Mr. Oliver and the face of the boy that he sees in the dark. One evening while passing through the pine forest, Mr. Oliver sees the terrible featureless face of a school boy who was sitting on a rock and sobbing bitterly. Quite unnerved by this apparition he runs back for his life towards the school building. As he stumbles upon the school watchman there, he discovers the same face on the watchman which he had seen on the boy. The light of the lamp goes out and the story ends. This supernatural story that revolves around the same featureless, horrifying 'face' that Mr. Oliver sees in the 'dark' on two different apparitions has been presented in the most natural way and thereby justifies the befitting title 'A Face in the Dark'.