

UNIT ELEVEN: CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

The Stub Book

Pedro Antonio de Alarcon, Spain (1833-1891)

The story "The Stub Book" is written by Spanish writer, Pedro Antonio de Alarcon. The story is about using the creativity to solve the problems in life. "*To claim anything we must have the sufficient convincing proof not to be justified as wrong*" is the central idea of the story.

Uncle Buscabeatas had grown up forty big pumpkins, who was a gardener at Rota. He used to love the pumpkins as a father loves the daughter. He was planning to sell the pumpkins tomorrow morning in Cadiz. When he went to garden next morning, he found all his pumpkins stolen. He didn't lose the hope and went to Cadiz with an expectation of getting all his pumpkins. When he reached to the Cadiz, he found all the pumpkins in a vegetable shop. At first, he blamed the shopkeeper as a thief but later he came to know that the pumpkins were stolen and sold by *Mr. Fulano*. As a proof, *Uncle Buscabeatas* had the stub-book of all the pumpkins. The inspector, the crowd of the people, and policemen were also agreed with the proof of *Buscabeatas*, the *Mr. Fulano* returned fifteen duros to the shopkeeper and the shopkeeper gave the amount of pumpkins to an old man. Then *Uncle Buscabeatas* returned back to the house with the money whereas *Mr. Fulano* was taken to the prison.

Hence, the story is about importance of using logic and creativity to solve the problem in life.

Mr. Know-All

W. Somerset Maugham, England (1874-1965)

The story, "Mr. Know-All" is written by an English writer, W. Somerset Maugham. In the story, the writer shows two important issues: racial feeling i.e. the writer's reluctance to share the cabin with *Mr. Kelada*, a Negro and next is the nature of women's in the absence of their husbands' i.e. *Mr. Kelada* said, "*If I have a pretty little wife, I shouldn't let her spent a year in New York while I stayed at Kobe.*"

The writer was going to Yokohama, Japan from San Francisco, USA. It was a journey of fourteen days. The writer had to share the cabin with *Mr. Kelada* but he didn't want. *Mr. Kelada* was frank and became familiar with everyone in the ship. He put his logic on different pictures and politics. Though the writer didn't like him, *Mr. Kelada* served the drink. Because of his logic on different issues in a pragmatic and logical way, his nickname was kept '*Mr. Know-All*'. One day *Mr. Kelada* was sharing table with *Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay* who were returning back to Kobe from New York. *Mrs. Ramsay* was pretty woman with pleasant manner. She was left in New York for a year in the absence of her husband. One evening when they were having dinner, they started talking about pearls. *Mr. Kelada* told *Mr. Ramsay* that he knew everything about pearls. They bet on the chain that had been owned by *Mrs. Ramsay*. *Mr. Kelada* told that the chain costs fifteen to thirty thousand dollar but *Mr. Ramsay* was told by his wife that the chain was bought in eighteen dollars and was a duplicate. *Mr. Kelada* observed it minutely and found that it wasn't a duplicate. *Mr. Ramsay* was deceived by his wife. While discussing about the chain, *Mr. Kelada* found *Mrs. Ramsay* restless, nervous and scared. Then, *Mr. Kelada* knowingly lost the bet and paid hundred dollars to *Mr. Ramsay* because he didn't want to destroy the conjugal life of *Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay*. Next morning *Mr. Kelada* found an envelope where hundred dollars was kept. *Mr. Ramsay* was cheated by *Mrs. Ramsay* that can clearly be experienced as *Mr. Kelada* said, "*If I have a pretty little wife, I shouldn't let her spent a year in New York while I stayed at Kobe.*"

Hence, the story raises the issues of racial feeling and the nature of the women. The title of the story is justified in the sense that *Mr. Kelada* who is

known as *Mr. Know-All* not only knows about the issue of the world around him but also the psychology of *Mrs. Ramsay*.

Four levels of the story Mr. Know-All:

1. Literal Comprehension

The story "Mr. Know-All" is written by an English writer, W. Somerset Maugham. The writer was going to Yokohama, Japan from Francisco, USA. It was a journey of fourteen days. The writer had to share the cabin with *Mr. Kelada* but he didn't want. *Mr. Kelada* was frank and became familiar with everyone in the ship. He put his logic on different pictures and politics. Though the writer didn't like him, *Mr. Kelada* served the drink. Because of his logic on different issues in a pragmatic and logical way, his nickname was kept '*Mr. Know-All*'. One day *Mr. Kelada* was sharing table with *Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay* who were returning back to Kobe from New York. *Mrs. Ramsay* was pretty woman with pleasant manner. She was left in New York for a year in the absence of her husband. One evening when they were having dinner, they started talking about pearls. *Mr. Kelada* told *Mr. Ramsay* that he knew everything about pearls. They bet on the chain that had been owned by *Mrs. Ramsay*. *Mr. Kelada* told that the chain costs fifteen to thirty thousand dollar but *Mr. Ramsay* was told by his wife that the chain was bought in eighteen dollars and was a duplicate. *Mr. Kelada* observed it minutely and found that it wasn't a duplicate. *Mr. Ramsay* was deceived by his wife. While discussing about the chain, *Mr. Kelada* found *Mrs. Ramsay* restless, nervous and scared. Then, *Mr. Kelada* knowingly lost the bet and paid hundred dollars to *Mr. Ramsay* because he didn't want to destroy the conjugal life of *Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay*. Next morning *Mr. Kelada* found an envelope where hundred dollars was kept. *Mr. Ramsay* was cheated by *Mrs. Ramsay* that can clearly be experienced as *Mr. Kelada* said, "*If I have a pretty little wife, I shouldn't let her spent a year in New York while I stayed at Kobe.*"

2. Interpretation

In the story, the writer shows two important issues: racial feeling i.e. the writer's reluctance to share the cabin with *Mr. Kelada*, a Negro and next is the nature of the women's in the absence of their husbands' i.e. *Mr. Kelada* said, "*If I have a pretty little wife, I shouldn't let her spent a year in New York while I stayed at Kobe.*"

3. Critical Thinking

The story raises the issues of racial feeling and the nature of the women. But some of the ideas in the story are not convincing. In the story, *Mr. Kelada* knows not only the issue of world around him but also the psychology of *Mrs. Ramsay*, while *Mr. Ramsay* is unknown about his own wife's psychology. Can a person in a first meet understand the psychology of another person? Etc.

4. Assimilation

After reading this story, I really understood the importance of keeping knowledge about each and every little thing we go by on our day to day life. It not only makes us updated but helps in the actions or steps we take in process of our problem solution or leading our steps to success.



Keep Errors at Bay

Bertrad Russell, England (1872-1970)

The essay "Keeping Errors at Bay" is written by an English writer, Bertrad Russell. In the essay, the writer has given various ideas to keep the errors at bay in our life. According to the writer, the following are the ways to avoid errors in our life:

- i. The writer says that we don't know anything easily. We should go in depth to know exactly and we can reach in conclusion. To understand the thing exactly, it is necessary to have close observation and great attention.
- ii. If we become unable to pay attention and close observation, we have to compare our ideas, logics and reasons with our opponents.
- iii. To avoid our dogmatism, we need to be conscious on the opinions held in social circles different from your own. We should travel different places and read the opponents newspaper.
- iv. Imaginary opponents should be made and should compare our ideas with that, if we don't have the opponents.
- v. We shouldn't praise ourselves and should avoid our self-estimation. We should accept the **existence** of other people and should respect them.
- vi. Fear is the main source of wrong ideas. E.g. Fear of pain, death, dark etc. In frightening situation, mind can't be used properly and wrong ideas emerge in the mind. Because of the fear, human beings are being conservative and superstitious. To overcome from the fear is the beginning of the wisdom.

What Is Intelligence, Anyway?

Isaac Asimov, USA (1920-1992)

The essay "What Is Intelligence, Anyway?" is written by an *American writer*, Isaac Asimov. In the essay, the writer is trying to broaden the concept of intelligence going beyond the traditional definition of it. The traditional definition intelligence is '*the ability which can secure the highest marks in an aptitude or IQ test*'.

The writer, Asimov, used to be boosted on his intelligence because he was able to secure 160 against 100 of his competitors in an aptitude test that was held among the soldiers. In many other aptitude tests, he was able to secure the top score, so that he used to show a kind of proud on his ability. The writer had a hardware mechanic who had the habit of making pranks, who once asked the writer a question, "*How would a blind man ask the scissors from the shop?*" In response, the writer started making his fingers into the scissoring motion. What actually he forgot is the blind man can speak. In such situation, the writer felt uneasy.

Hence, the essay is about the multiple types of intelligence that the human being possesses. The story can be interpreted as the criticism on the traditional way of definition of intelligence that is based on only the ability to secure highest score in IQ test which is fixed and permanent that couldn't include the multiple and emotional intelligence of human beings.