



UNIT-5

The Tiger's Claw

ACTIVITY - 1

Imagine the following situations. Write down what you would do. Share your points with your teacher and classmates.

- (1) You are sitting in the garden on a bench, watching the children playing. You look up and this is what you see.....



- (2) You are bending and looking under the bed, helping your grandfather find his sandals. This is what jumps over your hand.



- (3) You are washing your hands. Suddenly a large number of cockroaches came out of the drain.



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- (4) You are alone at home. You hear the door creak and see him.



ACTIVITY - 2

THE TIGER'S CLAW PART - 1

(1)

I opened my eyes and saw at the door a tiger pushing himself in. It was a muddled moment for me: not being sure whether the dream was continuing or whether I was awake. I, at first, thought it was my friend the station-master who was coming in, but my dream had fully prepared my mind. I saw the thing clearly against the starlit sky, tail wagging, growling, and, above all, his terrible eyes gleaming through the dark. I understood the fertilizer company would have to manage without my lectures from the following day. The tiger himself was rather startled by the noise of the chair and stood hesitating. He saw me quite clearly in my corner, and he seemed to be telling himself,

“My dinner is there ready but let me first know what this clattering noise is about.”

(2)

Somehow wild animals are less afraid of beings than they are of pieces of furniture like chairs and tables. I have seen circus men managing a whole menagerie with nothing more than a chair. God gives us such recollections in order to save us at critical moments; and as the tiger stood observing me and watching the chair, I put out my hands and with desperate





strength drew the table towards me, and also the stool. I sat with my back to the corner, the table wedged in nicely with the corner. I sat under it and the stool walled up another side. While I dragged the table down, a lot of things fell of it, a table-lamp, a long knife and pins. From my shelter, I peeped at the tiger who was also watching me with interest. Evidently he didn't like his meal to be so completely shut out of sight. So he cautiously advanced a step or two, making a sort of rumbling noise in his throat which seemed to shake up the little station house. My end was nearing. I really pitied the woman whose lot it was to have become my wife.

(3)

I held up the chair like a shield and flourished it, and the tiger hesitated and fell back a step or two. Now once again we spent some time watching for each other's movements. I held my breath and waited. The tiger stood there fiercely waving its tail, which sometimes struck the side walls and sent forth a thud. He suddenly crouched down without taking his eyes off me, and scratched the floor with his claws. "He is sharpening them for me," I told myself. The little shack had already acquired the smell of a zoo. It made me sick. The tiger kept scratching the floor with his forepaws. It was the most hideous sound you could think of.

ACTIVITY - 3

Match words in column A with their meanings in column B.

A	B
Muddled	shiny or polished
starlit	moving rapidly to and fro
Wagging	lit by stars
Gleaming	deep and echoing sound
Clattering	ugly
Menagerie	a curved and pointed nails of some mammals.
Rumbling	confused/bewildered
Claw	a collection of wild animals kept privately or for the public to see
Hideous	a loud rattling sound as hard objects falling or striking with each other

ACTIVITY - 4

Answer the following questions:

(Refer to paragraph 1)

1. What word has the author used to describe 'the moment' ?
2. Why has he used this describing word or adjective ?
3. Which two statements suggest that the narrator is sure the tiger is going to kill him ?
4. How was the tiger approaching his prey ?



(Refer to paragraph 2)

1. “God gives us such recollections in order to save us at critical moments”. To what recollection does the narrator refer?
2. I really pitied the woman whose lot it was to become my wife.
 - a) Who is the woman to be pitied?
 - b) Why is she to be pitied ?
3. How did the narrator use the furniture to his advantage ?

(Refer to paragraph 3)

1. I held my breath and waited. This line creates a sense of _____.
 - a) surprise
 - b) interest
 - c) suspense

Comment on the narrator's feelings when he says, "It was the most hideous sound you could think of ." Justify the statement.

ACTIVITY - 5

PART - 2

(4)

All of a sudden he sprang up and flung his entire weight on this lot of furniture. I thought it'd be reduced to matchwood, but fortunately your railways have a lot of foresight and choose the heaviest timber for their furniture. That saved me. The tiger could do nothing more than perch himself on the roof of the table and hang down his paws: he tried to strike me down, but I parried with a chair and stool. The table rocked under him. I felt smothered; I could feel his breath on me.

(5)

He sat completely covering the top, and went on shooting his paws in my direction. He would have scooped portions out of me for his use, but fortunately I sat right in the corner, a hair's-breadth out of his reach on any side. He made vicious sounds and wriggled over my head. He could have knocked the chair to one side and dragged me out if he had come down, but somehow the sight of the chair seemed to worry him for a time. He preferred to be out of its reach. This battle went on for a while, I cannot say how long: Time had come to a dead stop in my world. He jumped down and walked about the table, looking for a gap: I rattled the chair a couple of times, but very soon it lost all its terror for him; he patted the chair and found that it inoffensive. At this discovery he tried to hurl it aside. But I was too quick for him. I swiftly drew it towards me and wedged it tight into the arch of the table, and the stool protected me on another side. I was more or less in a stockade made of the legs of furniture. He sat up on his haunches in front of me, wondering how best to get me.

(6)

Now the chair, table and stool had formed a solid block, with me at their heart, and they could withstand all his tricks. He scrutinized my arrangement with great interest, espied a gap and thrust his paw in. It dangled in my eyes with the curved claws opening out towards me. I felt very angry at the sight of it. Why should I allow the offensive to be developed all in his own way? I felt very indignant. The long knife from the station-master's table was lying nearby. I picked it up and drove it in. He withdrew his paw, maddened by pain. He jumped up and nearly brought down the room, and then tried to crack to bits the entire stockade. He did not succeed. He once again thrust his paw in. I employed the knife to good purpose and cut off a digit with the claw on it. It was a fight to the finish between him and me. He returned again and again to the charge. And I cut out, let me confess, three



claws, before I had done with him. I had become as bloodthirsty as he.
 . (Those claws, mounted on gold, are hanging around the necks of my daughters. You can come and see them if you like sometime)



ACTIVITY - 6

Match words in A with their meaning in B and then use them in your sentences.

A	B
Foresight	To sit
Timber	Gatekeeper
Hunches	Insight or Prejudice
Porter	To climb
Mount	Wood prepared for use in building and carpentry

ACTIVITY - 7

Answer the following questions:

(Refer to Paragraph 4)

1. The word 'lot' has been used in para 2 as well as in para 4. What are the two different meanings that it conveys?
2. How can we say that the narrator is grateful to the railways?

(Refer to paragraph 5)

1. Explain why the comment is made...Time had come to a dead stop in my world.
2. At this discovery he tried to hurl it aside. What was the 'discovery'?
3. Describe the stockade that the narrator had made for himself.

(Refer to Paragraph 6)

1. The narrator felt indignant because...
 - a) the tiger was scrutinizing the arrangement
 - b) all along he was acting on the defensive
 - c) he was safe in his stockade
2. The narrator had become as bloodthirsty as the tiger. Justify.
3. The narrator had only one weapon which he put to good use. What was it? How did he use it?
4. When and how did the narrator feel relieved?





ACTIVITY - 8

In the lesson you come across words denoting sounds like---- growling, rumbling, thud. Such words are called onomatopoeic words. They are often used in poetry. The figure of speech is called onomatopoeia.

A- Listed below are such other sounds:

rustling; lispings; gurgling; shuffling ;clinking; twanging
zooming; tingling; screeching; swishing; popping; jingling

B- Now match them correctly with the nouns given below:

1. _____ of babies
2. _____ of keys
3. _____ of silk
4. _____ of motorbike
5. _____ of the cane
6. _____ of water
7. _____ of glass
8. _____ of a guitar string
9. _____ of brakes
10. _____ of corks
11. _____ of feet
12. _____ of steel

ACTIVITY - 9

Read aloud the following words. Note the difference in the vowel sounds.

stool	stall	stale
halo	hello	hollow
fellow	follow	fallow
said	sail	sad
live	leave	love
worry	weary	wary
good	goal	god

ACTIVITY - 10

Imagine you are the narrator. One day, you and your daughters are visiting the zoo. You see, in one of the cages, a tiger with three digits of his foot missing. You recognise the animal. But so does he! Write a dialogue between the tiger and the narrator.

(You may begin like this.....)

Tiger : How extraordinary that we should meet again! Now I.....

