



THE VILLAGE
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
"We Nurture Dreams"

Summary

The story, *Madam Rides the Bus*, illustrates the sensitive story of a young eight-year-old Tamil girl Valliammai. Valli was always curious to explore the outside world. She had no friends to play games with. So, her favourite pastime was to stand in the doorway of her house and watch all that was happening on the street outside. She would watch people get on and off the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town. The bus that was filled with a new set of passengers filled her with a sense of unending joy. She had a strong urge to take a bus ride to explore the adventurous bus journey. Hence, she collected information about the bus timings by listening to the conversations of the people taking the bus ride. Soon she learnt that the bus journey from her village to the nearest town was approximately six miles. The bus fare costs thirty paise for a one-way ride. So, Valli started saving enough money to take a ride on the bus.

Valli planned to travel on the bus during the afternoon when her mother would be asleep. She stood on the roadside waiting for the bus. As the bus arrived, she told the conductor she wanted to go to town. The conductor happened to be a jovial person and referred to her as 'madam' and told her to hop into the bus and take her seat. She got into her bus quickly and noticed that the bus was painted in green and white colour stripes and looked brand new. The bus seats were luxurious, and the ride was comfortable. During her journey, Valli enjoyed looking at the greenery outside and the scenic natural beauty of the bus. She was thoroughly enjoying her bus ride and was amused when she saw a young cow that ran wildly in front of the bus and crossed the road. The driver blew the shrill horn as the cow crossed the road. This was a fascinating experience for Valli as she realised her dream of travelling on a bus had finally come true.

As Valli enjoyed watching the beautiful landscape outside, the bus started getting empty as the passengers got down to their respective stops. Soon, the conductor

asked her if she would like to roam about the stalls in the town, but she told him that she had limited money, which she needed to take the return bus ride. The conductor casually smiled at her reply. Valli stayed on the bus and took a ticket from the conductor to return to her village. As the bus started again, she noticed a dead cow and realised that it was the same cow that had run wildly in front of her bus during her onward journey to the town. Looking at the sight of the bleeding cow made her very sad, and she understood the meaning of life and death from this incident. Soon, the bus dropped her at the bus stop near her home, and she returned home just on time. Thus, no one in her family knew about her adventurous bus trip that she had taken all by herself without their knowledge.

Questions and Answers

Very Short Answer Questions

1. Who was Valli?

Answer: Valli was eight years old village girl.

2. What was Valli's favourite pastime?

Answer: Her favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house, watching what was happening in the street outside.

3. How old was Valli?

Answer: Valli was eight years old.

4. Who did Valli live with?

Answer: Valli lived with her mother.

5. What was the most fascinating thing for Valli?

Answer: The sight of the bus, filled each time with a new set of passengers was the most fascinating thing for Valli.

6. When would Valli be jealous?

Answer: Valli would be jealous when one of her friends described the sight of the town to her.

7. What did Valli carefully listen to?

Answer: Valli carefully listened to conversations of her neighbours who used the bus regularly.

8. How far was the town from the village?

Answer: It was at a distance of six miles.

9. What type of man as the bus conductor?

Answer: The bus conductor was a jolly and fun-loving type of person.

10. How much money did Valli save for the bus ride?

Answer: She saved sixty paise for the bus ride.

11. What made Valli sad?

Answer: The sight of the dead cow made Valli sad.

12. What was Valli's deepest desire?

Answer: Valli's deepest desire was to have a bus ride to the town.

13. What does the bus conductor call Valli?

Answer: The bus conductor calls her 'madam'.

14. What did Valli buy from the town?

Answer: She bought nothing from the town.

15. What was the most fascinating thing for Valli?

Answer: The most fascinating thing for Valli was the bus that travelled between and the nearest town.

16. Why does Valli refuse to look out of the window on her way back?

Answer: Valli refused to look out of the window on her way back because the memory of the dead cow haunted her, dampening her enthusiasm.

17. Why does Valli find information about the bus to the town?

Answer: Valli gathered information about the bus because she wanted to take at least ride in the bus that was fascinating for her.

18. Why was the conductor of the bus amused while talking to Valli?

Answer: The conductor of the bus was a jolly person who was fond of joking. Quote two instances to amused while talking to Valli who pretended to be a grown person.

19. How did Valli manage to leave the house?

Answer: Valli knew that after lunch her mother would nap for about one to four or so. It was Valli's habit to engage these hours for her excursions and move outside the village.

20. What type of person was the conductor?

Answer: the conductor was a very wise man and knew how to tackle and talk with the passenger. He was fond of jokes and in his jolly tone interrogated Valli many times.

[Short Answer Type Questions](#)

1. How did Valli react when she saw the dead cow by the roadside?

Answer: On her return journey, Valli saw a dead cow lying in the middle of the road. It was lying sprawled in a pool of blood, legs spread out, and lifeless eyes staring a horrible scene. She felt sad and this made her lose all the enthusiasm.

2." Valli enjoyed each moment of her bus ride."

Answer: "Valli enjoyed each moment of her bus ride."

-Valla devoured everything with her eyes.

-On viewing the outside view she sighed, "Oh, it was all so wonderful."

3. Give examples from the text to show that Valli was a meticulous planner.

Answer: Valli was a meticulous planner. She listened carefully to the conversations between her neighbours and people who regularly used the bus and also asked discreet questions. She picked up various small details about the bus journey and then planned it.

4. How can you say that the conductor was a good-natured jolly fellow? Support your answer with examples.

Answer: The conductor was a fun-loving, jolly fellow. For instance-when Valli refused his help to board the bus he said jokingly, "Don't be angry with me, fine madam... Everyone move aside please – make way for madam'.

5. What details did Valli pick up about the bus journey? How did she pick up these details?

Or

What information did Valli collect for her first bus ride?

Answer: Valli gathered all the minute details about the bus journey. She gathered that she required sixty paise to buy tickets for the up and down journey and that the bus would take ninety minutes from the village to town and back. She carefully listened to the conversations of the passengers and villagers to get the details.

6. What made Valli sad on her return journey?

Answer: On her return journey, Valli saw a dead cow lying in the middle of the road. It was lying sprawled in a pool of blood, legs spread out, lifeless eyes staring—a horrible scene. She felt sad.

7. What was a source of unending joy for Valli? What was her strongest desire?

Or

What was the most fascinating thing for Valli?

Answer: Valli's source of unending joy was to have a bus ride. That was her tiny wish which grew into a strong desire with the passage of time. Her

desire turned into longing as she wistfully stared at the faces of the passengers who got on or off the bus.

8. What was Valli's favourite pastime?

Or

Valla was an eight-year-old girl who was very curious about things. What was her favourite Pastime?

Answer: Vales favourite pastime was to stand in the front doorway of her house. She did not play like most other children because there were no playmates of her age on her street. Watching the street also gave her many unusual experiences which were equally enjoyable.

9. Give two reasons why Valli found the elderly woman on the bus, repulsive.

Answer: Valla did not want to make friends with the elderly woman because she found her repulsive as she had big holes in her earlobes and was wearing ugly earrings. She could the betel nut the woman was chewing.

10. Why did Valli not get off the bus when it stopped at the bus stand?

Answer: Vales sole purpose was to enjoy the bus ride. She neither had the money to buy anything from the shops at the town nor the courage to get down at the strange among at rangers.

11. Why does the conductor refer to Valli as 'madam'?

Answer: The conductor was worldly wise and a man of jovial nature. He judges the little girl 's innocent behaviour. Being fun to love and also not to make the girl unhappy, he calls Valla as 'Madam', though she was a girl of eight years only.

12. Write down the conductor's advice to Valli?

Answer: Calling Valli a child. the conductor requested her to sit down. It will make her comfortable. Standing up, again and again, can make her fall and get hurt because the bus can make a sharp turn.

13. What did Valli calculate and plan?

Answer: Valli calculated and planned that if she took one o'clock on the afternoon bus. she would reach the town at one forty-five. On reaching town if she stayed in her scat and paid another thirty paise she could return home by the same bus by about two forty-five.

14. What did Valli's mother say about the things happening without our knowledge?

Answer: Valli's mother said that so many things happen amidst us and in the world outside. We cannot know about everything. Even when we know about something we often can't understand it completely.

15. What was the favourite pastime of Valli?

Answer: Valliammai or Valli was eight years old. Her favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house. From there, she watched what was happening in the street outside. For her, standing at the front door was as enjoyable as any of the games other children played.

16. What was the most fascinating thing for Valli?

Answer: The most fascinating thing for Valli was the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town. The sight of the bus was a source of unending joy for her. Each time she used to see a new set of passengers, it was a very thrilling experience for her.

17. What was the tiny wish that crept into Valli's head?

Answer: The sight of the bus was the most fascinating thing for Valli. Day after day she watched the bus. A tiny wish crept into her head. She wanted to ride on that bus. At least, once. This wish became so strong that it grew into an overwhelming desire.

18. Why did Valli listen to the conversations? What did she get from them?

Answer: Valli was anxious to know more and more about the bus journey. She had nourished a strong desire to enjoy a bus ride from her village to the nearest town. She listened to the neighbours and people who regularly used the bus. She was collecting the necessary details from them to plan out her bus journey. Such details could help her in her mission.

19. How did Valli calculate and plan the bus journey?

Answer: Valli had gathered all the necessary details about the bus journey from those who regularly used the bus. The town was six miles from her village. The one-way fare was thirty paise. The trip to the town took forty-five minutes. If she took the one o'clock bus, she could reach the town at one forty-five. She calculated that she could be back home by about two forty-five.

20. How did Valli board the bus? Why did she say, 'I can get on by myself'?

Answer: When Valli sighted the bus she shouted 'Stop the bus! Stop the bus!' She raised her tiny hand 'commandingly'. The bus slowed down and finally stopped. She told the conductor that she wanted to go to the town and she tried to hand over the money. The conductor, seeing that she was just a child, stretched out his hand to help her up. Valli replied that she could get on by herself and didn't need any help.

21. Why was Valli overcome with shyness and avoided everyone's eyes?

Answer: It was the slack time of the day. There were only six or seven passengers on the bus. They were all looking at Valli and laughing with the

conductor. Valli was overcome with shyness. She tried to avoid everyone's eyes. She walked quickly to an empty seat and sat down.

22. What did Valli see when she peered over the blind?

Answer: Valli found that a canvas blind cut off her view. So, she peered over the blind to look outside. The bus was going along the bank of a canal. Beyond its palm trees and grassland and distant mountains. And then, there were acres of green fields as far as her eyes could see.

23. Why didn't Valli like the remark of the elderly man? What did she say to him?

Answer: An elderly man saw Valli standing on the bus. He asked her to sit down. He had honestly felt concerned for her. Valli didn't like to be called herself a 'child'. She retorted that she was not a child. She had paid thirty paise like everyone else.

24. How did Valli react when the conductor called her "a very grown-up madam?"

Answer: The bus conductor teased Valli by calling her 'a very grown-up madam'. Valli reacted sharply saying that she was not a madam. She reminded him that he had not yet given her ticket. The conductor mimicked her tone and said, 'I'll remember.' Everyone laughed and gradually Valli too joined in the laughter.

25. Why did Valli find the elderly woman absolutely repulsive?

Answer: The elderly woman who was sitting beside Valli in the bus looked absolutely repulsive to Valli. She had big holes in her ears and had ugly earrings in them. She didn't relish the smell of the betel nut that she was chewing. The beetlejuice was about to spill over her lips at any moment. She couldn't be social with such a woman.

26. How careful and painstaking elaborate plans did Valli have to make for her first journey and how did she save money for it?

Answer: Valli had to make careful and painstaking plans for her first bus journey. Saving sixty paise for both ways fare was not an easy job. She saved thriftily every stray coin that came in her way. She had to give up the temptation of buying peppermints, toys and balloons and stifle her desire to ride on the merry-go-round.

27. What was the next problem after Valli had enough money?

Answer: After she had saved enough money, Valli had her next problem. It was how to slip out of the house without her mother's knowledge. She solved this problem easily. Every day after lunch her mother would nap from about one to four or so. She could easily venture out on her mission.

28. Why did Valli laugh until there were tears in her eyes?

Answer: Valli saw a young cow running very fast in the middle of the road. It was right in front of the bus. The bus slowed down to a crawl. The driver sounded the horn loudly again and again. But more he honked, the more frightened the animal became and galloped right in front of the bus. Valli laughed until there were tears in her eyes.

29. Why didn't Valli get off the bus when the bus stopped at the town?

Answer: Valli's destination, the nearest town from her village, had come. Everyone got off except Valli. The conductor reminded that her destination had come and she should get off the bus. Valli told that she was going back on the same bus. She handed thirty more coins to the conductor and asked for the ticket. She just felt like having a bus ride again.

30. Why didn't Valli want to have a look at the sights alone?

Answer: The conductor asked if Valli didn't want to have a look at the sights in the town. She replied that she would be too afraid to visit them all alone. The conductor reminded that she was travelling all alone by bus. Valli replied that there was nothing to be afraid of in the bus.

31. Why didn't Valli accept a free drink from the bus conductor? What does this act show about her character?

Answer: The bus conductor asked Valli to let him bring her a cold drink. She replied that she didn't have enough money for that. He should just give him her ticket. The conductor offered to give it totally free. She said firmly, 'Please, no.' This shows how proud and self-respecting Valli was.

32. What dampened Valli's enthusiasm during the return journey?

Answer: During her return journey, Valli saw a young cow lying dead by the side of the road. She was the same lovable and beautiful cow that she saw only a little while ago. Now, it looked so horrible and frightening as it lay there. There was a fixed stare in her lifeless eyes and she was smeared with blood. The sight dampened her enthusiasm and she stopped looking outside.

33. Did Valli's bus ride remain a secret for her mother and aunt?

Answer: When Valli entered her house, she found her mother awake and talking to one of her aunts. Her aunt was a real chatterbox. She asked where she had been so far. Valli's mother spoke casually. She didn't expect a reply. Both these ladies could know nothing about Valli's pleasure ride on the bus.

34. Why did Valli smile to herself? Did her mother and aunt had any chance of knowing the secret of her smile?

Answer: Valli agreed with her mother that many things were happening outside in the world without their knowledge. Ironically, the two ladies didn't know anything about Valli's bus-journey. They didn't know that `just a chit of

a girl' had done such a great feat. Valli smiled to herself. There was no chance of her secret being exposed.

Long Answer Type Questions

1. Write a character sketch of Valla.

Answer: Valla was an eight-year-old girl born in a small village. However, she was a very curious girl. She spent her time standing in the front doorway of her house, watching what was happening in the street outside. Watching the street gave her many new and unusual experiences. Her curiosity about travelling on the bus to the town urged her on to plan her trip. She was very meticulous in planning for the trip. She calculated the distance between her home and the town, the time it took for a trip up and down by bus etc. Valla also proved to be very impressive and bold by finally deciding to ride on the bus. Her childish innocence veiled by her smart and bold outlook amused the conductor who offered her a seat in the bus.

Valla thoroughly enjoyed her ride to the town, and laughed and clapped when the young cow ran in the middle of the road in front of the bus. But her enjoyable bus ride became a nightmare on her return journey. She saw the same cow lying dead on the road. This sight haunted her, dampened her spirits, and saddened her. This is typical of the tendency of a matured person. She refused to look out of the window thereafter. Valla, on the whole, can be described as a curious, joyful, disciplined, smart, bold, and at the same time, a mature girl.

2." Never mind," she said, "I can get on by myself." "You don't have to help me," said Valla to the conductor. She shows extraordinary courage in making the bus journey all alone. Taking inspiration from Valla's character, write how the ability and courage to take risks are essential to fulfilling one's dream.

Or

Valla nurtures a strong desire to travel by bus and visit the city. She works hard for it and finally, she is successful. Based on this incident, analyze what values of life do you need to nurture to attain your goals in life?

Answer: Valla is an eight-year-old village girl. She is fascinated by the bus that comes to the village every hour. She develops a desire and then a longing turning into a firm determination to ride the bus. She meticulously plans for it and saves money for the bus journey. Then she boards the bus without anyone's help. She travels all alone, confidently and independently and finally returns home successfully. Her self-dependence and self-respecting nature help her to nurture her goal. She enjoys her journey. Similarly, to achieve goals in life, we need to have such values in us. One should be confident and self-dependent. Proper planning and strong determination will lead to success. Enthusiasm and excitement to achieve the goal are also needed to nurture our goals in life.

3. Valli was so overcome with sadness to see the dead cow that she lost all enthusiasm. Do you feel the same way? If you feel concerned about the plight of animals falling prey to the fast-moving traffic, what efforts will you make to make travelling on roads a safer activity?

Answer: While going to town, Valla saw a cow running in the middle of the road in front of the bus. The more the driver honked the horn, the faster it galloped. Valla laughed to see that. On her return journey, Valla saw the same cow, lying sprawled in a pool of blood, with legs spread out, and lifeless eyes, staring. It saddened her making her lose all enthusiasm.

I also feel the same when I see animals falling prey to the fast-moving traffic. We should take some serious steps to make road travel safer. Firstly, stray animals should be kept away from busy roads. Proper shelters should be made for them. Secondly, traffic laws should be implemented strictly. Whosoever violates the traffic rules must be penalized with fines, punishments and other legal provisions as and when required. Rash driving must be kept under a check. If an animal falls prey to a road accident, it must be rushed to the animals' hospital immediately.

4. How did Valla save up money for her first journey? Was it easy for her? Justify.

Answer: Valla's sole purpose was to enjoy the bus ride. She neither had the money nor much information about the ride. But her desire made her collect every minute detail about it. She gathered that she required sixty paise to buy tickets for the up and down journey. She collected every stray penny. She resisted the temptation to buy peppermint, toys, even a joy-ride at the merry-go-round. Thus she saved 60 paise to buy tickets for the bus ride.

No, it was not easy for a young child of eight years. This act of her reflects that she has the qualities of self-restraint, discipline, determination and maturity rare for her age.

5. Justify the statement with instances that Valla was a mature girl and ahead of her age?

Answer: Valla was an eight-year-old village girl. She had no playmates. Her favourite pastime was to stand at the doorstep and watch things and people. She not only satisfied her curiosity but also gained new experiences. Her strongest desire was to make a bus-ride. She meticulously planned for it – gathered information about the distance, time and ticket money. Showing self-restraint, she resisted the temptation to buy peppermint, toys or a ride on the merry-go-round in order to save 60 paise for the bus journey. She boarded the bus without anyone's help, refused a free treat by the conductor and didn't talk to strangers. This shows her commanding, confident and self-dependent nature. This also shows her determination and maturity at such a little age.

6. Valla's journey to the city is also her induction into the mystery of life and death. Elaborate.

Answer: Valla gets introduced to the mystery of life and death on her first bus journey in the outside world. She was wonderstruck and enjoyed the beauty of the outside world. She clapped, laughed and enjoyed when she saw a young cow running in the middle of the road in front of the bus. The driver sounded the horn to warn it but the more he honked, the faster it galloped. Valla found it funny and amusing. She laughed till tears came into her eyes. On her way back, she saw the same cow lying dead on the road.

Some fast speeding vehicles must have hit it. It was a horrible sight. It looked quite frightening. It was lying their legs spread out, a fixed stare in its lifeless eyes and blood around it. The image of the dead cow haunted her, dampening her spirits and making her sad.

7. Who was Valli? What was her overwhelming desire?

Answer: Valli was an eight-year-old girl. She was a curious girl. She wanted to know many things. She did not have playmates of her own age. Her favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house to see what was happening outside. The most fascinating thing of all was the bus that passed through the street each hour. The bus travelled between her village and the nearest town. The sight of the bus was a source of unending joy for Valli. It was a great joy for her to watch new sets of passengers every time the bus passed through the street. As she watched the bus day after day, she developed a wish to have a ride on that bus. Her wish became stronger and stronger until it was an overwhelming desire

8. How did Valli plan to have a bus ride?

Answer: Valli carefully listened to the conversations between her neighbours and people who had travelled on the bus or who regularly used it. She asked some casual questions also. She came to know that the town was six miles away from her village. It took forty-five minutes to reach there. The fare was thirty paise for one way. Valli planned her journey to the town and back. It would be her first journey out of her village. She saved every paisa by resisting her desire to buy ice cream, toys, balloons, etc. She had also killed her desire to visit the village fair and have a ride on the merry-go-round. When she had saved sixty paise, she was ready for her first bus journey. Then she planned how she would slip out of the house. She knew that her mother slept dal after lunch. She decided to use these hours for her journey.

9. What did Valli notice after she boarded the bus?

Answer: Valli looked around in the bus. It had a soft and comfortable seat. It had a beautiful clock above the windscreen. The overhead bars shone like silver. Then she tried to look outside. She found her view cut off by a curtain that covered the lower part of her window. So she stood on her seat to enjoy the outside scene. The bus was going along the bank of a canal. She saw palm trees, mountains and the blue sky. On the other side, there were green fields. Suddenly an elderly man warned Valli not to stand on the seat. He called her a child and said that she could fall and get hurt. But Valli did not care for him. She told him proudly that she was not a 'child'. She had paid the full fare like the others. The conductor told the man that Valli was a grown-up madam. Valli looked at the conductor angrily and said that she was not a madam.

10. Describe Valli's return journey.

Answer: The bus resumed its return journey. There were the same wonderful sights. Valli enjoyed the scene again. But suddenly she saw a young cow lying dead, by the roadside. It had been struck by a fast-moving vehicle. She asked the conductor if it was the same cow they saw earlier. The conductor nodded. Valli became sad. It had been a lovable, beautiful creature just a little while ago. But now the cow was without its charm and its life. The bus moved on. The memory of the dead cow haunted Valli. She no longer wanted to see out of the window. She kept sitting on her seat until her village came. She got down and wished the conductor to see him again. The conductor smiled. He told Valli that whenever she felt like riding the bus she could come and join them.

11. Why does Valli refuse to look out of the window on her way back?

Answer: On her way to the town, Valli laughed heartily to see a young cow running at high speed in the middle of the road just in front of their bus. But on her way back, she saw a young cow lying dead near the road. She asked the bus conductor if it was the same cow that was running in front of the bus. The bus conductor nodded. She was shocked and sad. So she refuses to look out of the window on her way back because what was so beautiful a

little while ago now looked so horrible. The memory of the dead cow haunts her. It dampens her enthusiasm.

12. What was Valli's obsession? How did she prepare and save money for her first bus journey? Or How did Valli plan for her first bus journey?

Answer: The most fascinating sight for Valli was seeing the bus that travelled from her village to the nearest town. A tiny wish crept into her head. She wanted to ride on that bus, at least for once. This wish became stronger until it was an overwhelming desire. She listened to the conversations of her neighbours and people. They regularly used the bus. She found out after questioning them that both ways fare was sixty paise. It took forty-five minutes to reach the town. It was six miles from her village.

After gathering all the necessary details, Valli started saving money thriftily. She saved every coin that came her way. It was not an easy job for a girl of eight years. She had to resist the temptation of buying peppermints, toys, balloons and having a ride on the merry-go-round. When the money problem was solved, another problem was solved quite easily. She planned her journey during one to four o'clock when her mother took a nap in the afternoon. All such elaborate planning led Valli to have an enjoyable and smooth her first bus journey.

13. Describe what Valli saw during her bus journey. How did the scenes and sights affect her?

Answer: Valli was really excited. After all, it was her first bus journey. She 'devoured' everything with her eyes. When she started to look outside, her view was cut off by a canvas blind. She stood up on the seat and peered over the blind. She watched the bus passing along the bank of a canal. She saw palm trees, grasslands, distant mountains and the vast blue sky. Acres of green fields stretched out as far as her eyes could see the bus went past the railway station, the bright-looking shops and through the busy crossroads. One funny scene cheered her. A young cow ran in front of the bus. She was just in the middle of the road. The more the driver honked, the more frightened the cow became. Valli laughed till tears were in her eyes.

However, another sight dampened her enthusiasm. The same cow which looked so lovable and beautiful a while ago was lying dead beside the road. A fast-running vehicle had struck her dead. Now, the same cow was looking so horrible and frightening that Valli stopped looking outside. In short, the canal, mountains, palms, grasslands and the blue sky enthused and thrilled Valli. But, the repulsive elderly woman chewing the betel nut and the dead cow dampened her enthusiasm during the journey.

14. What did standing at the front door means to Valli?

Answer: Valliammai or Valli was just 'a chit of a girl'. She was eight years old. She was very curious about things. She was always anxious to gather all the details, why and how about things. She was not very social either. She had no playmates of her own age in her neighbourhood. Naturally, she could not play games with friends. But, she more than compensated this drawback. Her favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house. standing there, she could watch what was happening in the street outside.

But for Valli, standing at the front door was very enjoyable. Actually, it was as enjoyable as any of the games other children played. Watching the street gave her many new unusual experiences. The most fascinating of all these scenes was the scene of the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town. Seeing a new set of passengers every time, she also wished to have the bus ride, at least for once.

15. Do you think that Valli enjoyed her first ride on a bus? Give examples in support of your answer.

Answer: It was Valli's first bus ride. Naturally, she was full of excitement and enthusiasm. She devoured everything with her eyes. She stood up on the seat to have a full view of things outside. The bus was going along the bank of a canal. Beyond it, there were palms, grasslands and distant mountains. On the other side, there was a deep ditch. And then acres upon acres of green field stretched out as far as the eye could see.

The bus went past the railway station, the bright-looking shops and glittering displays of clothes and other merchandise in them. Suddenly, Valli clapped her hands with glee. She saw a young cow with her raised tail in the air running very fast just in the middle of the road. The driver sounded his horn loudly again and again. But the more he honked, the more frightened the cow became. Faster it galloped—always right in front of the bus. This was very funny to Valli. She laughed and laughed until there were tears in her eyes.

16. Describe Valli's interaction with (i) the conductor (ii) with the old gentleman (iii) with the elderly repulsive woman.

Answer: The conductor was a jolly sort of person. He was fond of joking. He enjoyed teasing Valli with his gentle comic remarks. He called her 'madam'. Valli reacted sharply replying that she was not a 'madam'. The conductor showed his concern when he tried to help her up, she told him that she could help herself. Valli showed that she was a self-respecting girl. She politely refused to accept a free drink from the conductor.

The Old gentleman was honestly concerned when he saw Valli standing in the bus. Listen, child ... you shouldn't stand like that', he said. Valli was annoyed by his attention and replied promptly that she was not a child. She had paid her thirty paise like everyone else. The elderly woman who sat beside her was quite repulsive to Valli. She didn't like the big holes in her ears and the ugly earrings in them. Nor did Valli relish the unpleasant smell that came from the betel nut she was chewing. She couldn't be social with such a person.

17. Give a character-sketch of Valli in your own words by giving examples from the text.

Answer: Valli emerges as a very clever, sensitive, self-respecting and fun-loving girl. She was just eight years old. She was very curious about things. She was a good observer of things. Her favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house. She used to watch from there what was happening in the street outside. There were no playmates of her

own age in the neighbourhood. Standing at the door was as enjoyable for her as any of the games children played.

Valli was mature, clever and practical beyond her years. Saving sixty paise was not an easy job for a girl of her age. She thriftily saved every coin that came in her way. She was determined to resist any temptation that came in her way. She sacrificed buying peppermints, toys, balloons and having a joy ride on a merry-go-round to save her money. Valli was full of excitement and enthusiasm. She enjoyed the landscape looking outside the window. The canal, palm trees, grassland, distant mountains and green fields gave her tremendous pleasure. The sight of a young cow running towards the bus at full speed enthused her. The more the driver honked, the more frightened the animal became and came just in front of the bus. Valli enjoyed the fun and laughed till the tears came into her eyes.

Valli was a very sensitive girl. She was shocked to see the same cow lying on the roadside smeared with blood. Her horrible and frightening looks dampened her enthusiasm. She stopped looking outside. Valli didn't like being called a 'madam' or 'a child'. She dared the conductor to mind his own business. Valli was a self-respecting girl. She didn't accept a free cold drink offered by the bus conductor. She was a great planner and planned things after knowing all the necessary details about them.

[Extract Based Questions](#)

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow:

Question 1: Suddenly she was startled by a voice. "Listen, child," said the voice, "you shouldn't stand like that. Sit down."

- a. Who was 'she' and whose voice was it?
- b. Why wasn't she sitting?
- c. What does Valli see?
- d. What was Valli's reaction when she was called a 'child' by an elderly person?

Answer: a. She was Valli. The voice was that of an elderly man who was concerned about Valli standing on the window seat.

b. As she sat on the seat, she found her view cut off by a canvas blind that covered the lower part of the window. So she stood up on the seat.

c. Valli sees the camel, green fields, palm trees, etc. with her own eyes.

d. She was annoyed rather angry at the elderly person.

Question 2: ‘Listen, child,’ said the voice, ‘you shouldn’t stand like that. Sit down.’ Sitting down, she looked to see who had spoken. It was an elderly man who had honestly been concerned for her, but she was annoyed by his attention. ‘There’s nobody here who’s a child,’ she said haughtily. ‘I’ve paid my thirty paise like everyone else.’

a. Who is the child mentioned in the passage?

b. How did the girl prove to the elderly man that she was not a child?

c. Why didn’t Valli want to make friends with the elderly woman?

d. What does Valli tell the elderly man when he calls her a child?

Answer: a. Valli is the child mentioned in the passage.

b. She said that she had paid thirty paise like every other passenger and was not a child.

c. Valli didn’t like the physical appearance of the elderly woman.

d. Valli told him that she was not a child as she had paid the same amount of the bus ticket as everyone else had paid.

Question 3: Valli wasn’t bored in the slightest and greeted everything with the same excitement she’d felt the first time. But suddenly she saw a young cow lying dead by the roadside, just where it had been struck by some fast-moving vehicle.

- a. While Valli was going back home, she saw something that changed her mood. What was it?
- b. How had the young cow met with this destiny?
- c. What made Valli sad and depressed on her journey back to the village?
- d. What kind of a person is Valli?

Answer: a. She saw a cow lying dead by the roadside.

b. It had been struck by some fast-moving vehicle.

c. On her return journey, Valli saw a dead cow lying in the middle of the road.

d. Valli was a kind, compassionate, self-confident, nature-loving and friendly girl.

Question 4: The conductor nodded, and she was overcome with sadness. What had been a lovable, beautiful creature just a little while ago had now suddenly lost its charm and its life and looked so horrible, so frightening as it lay there, legs spreadeagled, a fixed stare in its lifeless eyes, blood all over...

- a. Why is 'she' overcome with sadness?
- b. What had happened to the creature?
- c. Why is she so sad?
- d. When did she see the cow earlier?

Answer: a. She had just seen a young cow dead.

b. It had been struck by a fast-moving vehicle.

c. The cow that was full of joy and life a while ago, is lying dead-looking horrible.

d. She saw the cow earlier while going from her village on her bus journey.

Question 5: Over many days and months Valli listened carefully to conversations between her neighbours and people who regularly used the bus, and she also asked a few discreet questions here and there. This way she picked up various small details about the bus journey. The town was six miles from her village. The fare was thirty paise one way –“which is almost nothing at all.”

- a. What conclusion was made by Valli on the basis of information?
- b. What were the sources of information for her?
- c. Whose conversations did Valli listen to?
- d. What information did she want to get?

Answer: a. The town was six miles from her village and the fare was thirty paise one way.

b. Neighbours and people who regularly travelled by bus were the sources of information.

c. Conversations between the neighbours and people who regularly used the bus

d. She wanted to get all the details about the bus journey including the distance from the town, the fare and the total time required to reach the town and come back to the village, when the bus drove back after having stopped in the town for some time.

Question 6: After she had enough money saved, her next problem was how to slip out of the house without her mother’s knowledge. But she managed this without too much difficulty. Every day after lunch her mother would nap from about one to four or so. Valli always used these hours for her ‘excursions’ as she stood looking from the doorway of her house or sometimes even ventured out into the village; today, these same hours could be used for her first excursion outside the village.

- a. Who does ‘she’ refer to in the passage?
- b. What was her new problem after saving enough money for her bus ride?

- c. When did Valli plan to slip out of the house without her mother's knowledge?
- d. What did Valli normally use to do when her mother had her daily nap?

Answer: a. 'She' refers to Valli.

b. The new problem was how to escape without her mother's knowledge for the bus ride.

c. Valli planned to slip out of the house when her mother would be having her afternoon nap which was normally from 1 to 4 p.m.

d. Valli used to go to the village for other excursions.

Question 7: But for Valli, standing at the front door was every bit as enjoyable as any of the elaborate games other children played. Watching the street gave her many new unusual experiences. The most fascinating thing of all was the bus that travelled between her and the nearest town. It passed through her street each hour, once going to the town and once coming back. The sight of the bus, filled each time with a new set of passengers, was a source of unending joy for Valli.

- a. What was Valli's favourite pastime?
- b. Why did she watch the street?
- c. What was the source of unending joy for Valli?
- d. What gave Valli new unusual experiences?

Answer: a. Standing at the door, and watching the street was Valli's favourite pastime.

b. She watched the streets because it gave her many new unusual experiences.

c. The source of unending joy for Valli was to watch the bus and the people going on the bus.

d. Watching the street gave her many new unusual experiences.

Question 8: Her first journey—what careful, painstaking, elaborate plans she had to make for it. She had thriftily saved whatever stray coins came her way, resisting every temptation to buy peppermints, toys, balloons, and the like, and finally she had saved a total of sixty paise. How difficult it had been, particularly that day at the village fair, but she had resolutely stifled a strong desire to ride the merry-go-round, even though she had the money.

- a. Who does 'her' refer to in the passage?
- b. Where was her first journey made to?
- c. What did she do to make it a reality?
- d. How did she save the money for the bus fare?

Answer: a. 'Her' refers to Valli.

b. Her first journey was made to the town.

c. She made careful, painstaking and detailed plans to make it a reality.

d. She thriftily saved every penny, resisted temptation to buy things for her liking or taking a ride on the merry-go-round.

Question 9: But suddenly she saw a young cow lying dead by the roadside, just where it had been struck by some fast-moving vehicle. "Isn't that the same cow that ran in front of the bus on our trip to town?" she asked the conductor. The conductor nodded, and she was overcome with sadness.

- a. Whom does 'she' refer to?
- b. How does the presence of the cow affect her mood during her return journey?
- c. What kind of a person is Valli?
- d. When was Valli overcome with sadness?

Answer: a. 'She' refers to Valli, an eight-year-old girl.

- b. She was sad and sat quietly after seeing the dead cow.
- c. She is a kind and sensitive girl. Her spirits are dampened and she becomes sad to see a dead cow.
- d. When the conductor nodded in support of her query, Valli was overcome with sadness.

Question 10: The bus rolled on now cutting across a bare landscape, now rushing through a tiny hamlet or past an odd wayside shop. Sometimes the bus seemed on a point of gobbling up another vehicle that was coming towards them or a pedestrian crossing the road. But lo! somehow it passed on smoothly, leaving all obstacles safely behind. Trees came running towards them but then stopped as the bus reached them and simply stood there helpless for a moment by the side of the road before rushing away in the other direction.

- a. Where was the bus going?
- b. What was the speed of the bus?
- c. How did trees look to Valli from the running bus?
- d. What trait of Valli's character is reflected through the way she successfully planned her journey?

Answer: a. The bus was going to the town.

b. The bus was going very fast.

c. Trees seemed running towards them but then stopped as the bus reached them and stood there helpless by the side of the road.

d. The meticulous way with which Valli planned her bus journey reflects her management quality.

Self- Assessment Test

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow.

Question 1: There was a girl named Valliammai who was called Valli for short. She was eight years old and very curious about things. Her favourite pastime was standing in the front doorway of her house, watching what was happening in the street outside. There were no playmates of her own age on her street, and this was about all she had to do.

- a. How did Valli pass her time?
- b. Write one personality trait of Valli from the above extract.
- c. Who is the girl referred to in the passage?
- d. What did she do in the doorway of her house?

Question 2: Valli devoured everything with her eyes. But when she started to look outside, she found her view cut off by a canvas blind that covered the lower part of her window. So she stood up on the seat and peered over the blind. The bus was now going along the bank of a canal and beyond it, palm trees, grassland, distant mountains, and the blue, blue sky.

- a. Is Valli travelling to some definite place?
- b. Why does Valli stand on her seat?
- c. Why could Valli not enjoy the outside scene?
- d. Which trait of Valli's character is reflected in this passage?

Short Answer Questions

1. What details did Valli pick up about the bus journey? How did she pick up these details?
2. What made Valli sad on her return journey?
3. What was the most fascinating thing for Valli?
4. Valli was an eight-year-old girl who was very curious about things. What was her favourite pastime?
5. What did Valli's mother say about the things happening without our knowledge?

Long Answer Questions

1. How did Valli save up money for her first journey? Was it easy for her? Justify.
2. Justify the statement with instances that Valli was a mature girl and ahead of her age.
3. Describe Valli's return journey