

Silk Road

1. What do you mean by galloping?

Ans: Going at the pace of a horse

2. Which place does the author decide to go?

Ans: The author decided to go to Mount Kailash.

3. Why does the author go to Mount Kailash?

Ans: The author decided to go to Mount Kailash in order to complete the kora.

4. Why does the author take the shortcut?

Ans: The author took the shortcut so that he could get off the Changtant.

5. Which dog was famous in China and why?

Ans: Tibetan mastiffs were famous in China's imperial courts as hunting dogs. They were a tribute in ancient times from Tibet.

Short Answer Questions

1. Who was Lhamo?

Ans: Lhamo was the girl in the article “Silk Road” who wanted to give a farewell present to the author and also advised him to carry warm clothes while traveling to Mount Kailash.

2. What difficulties did Tsetan faced while taking shortcuts?

Ans: Tsetan and the author took a shortcut to get off the Changtang but this shortcut involved crossing several high mountain passes, the plains became less grassy and stonier. A herd of wild ass also came in between during this route.

3. What did the doctors in the Darchen Medical College look?

Ans: In the Darchen Medical College, there were Tibetan doctors who wore none of the paraphernalia which the author expected. With no white coat, and the doctors looked like any other Tibetan with a thick pullover and a woolly hat.

4. Why does Kora mean?

Ans: Kora indicates a rite of circumambulating the holy mountain. In other words, it means taking a full circle around it.

5. Comment on the appearance of Darchen Medical College.

Ans: From the outside, the Darchen Medical College resembled a monastery, with a sturdy entrance leading to a huge courtyard. The author and Tsetan entered a consulting room that was dark, chilly, and filled by a Tibetan doctor who lacked the customary trappings.

Short Answer Questions

1. “As a good Buddhist, he knew that it didn’t really matter if I passed away, but he thought it would be bad for business.” Demonstrate.

Ans: Tsetan was a Buddhist. He believed that death is the final “Nirvana”. Kailash was a holy place. He had a feeling that his death would discourage tourists from coming which might prove to be a bad sign for their business as the credibility would be at stake while looking after the tourists.

2. How the experience of the author at Hor was different from the earlier visits to the place?

Ans: Earlier, Hor was filled with natural beauty and was situated on sacred Lake Manasarovar. There were stories that various pilgrims cried seeing the beauty of the place. But the narrator’s experience was different from theirs. He did not feel good about the place as he observed that there was no vegetation in Hor and so the entire place looked dusty and rocky.

3. What made the author believe that his strategy of positive thinking went well?

Ans: The author observed that Darchen attracts a huge number of visitors throughout the year but still remains deserted or maybe the author arrived early. He felt lonely as there was no one around but then he met Norbu who was an English-speaking Tibetan and wanted to visit Kailash. Both of them thought of teaming up to visit the Kailash.

4. What disappointed the author in Darchen?

Ans: Darchen was grimy, partially dilapidated, and scattered by rubble and refuse. The lethargic and sluggish town had few simple general stores which sold Chinese cigarettes, soaps, and other basic necessities, as well as customary strings of prayer flags. The high altitude also gave him health problems and he caught a cold. He did not see any pilgrims in the place because of his early arrival. All these circumstances disappointed him.

5. How do you think Tsetan has supported the author during his journey?

Ans: Tsetan was a Buddhist who was also a good and efficient driver in the hills. He was very careful while driving. While his journey with the author to Darchen, he looked after the author. When he saw that the author was not well, he immediately took him to Darchen Medical College and got him treated.

Long Answer Questions - 5 Marks

1. Why do you think the lesson has been named "Silk Road"?

Ans: The Silk Road is a network of overland routes linking Europe with Asia. The Europeans followed this as a trading route for silk, horses, and exotic fauna and flora of the East. The travelers buy and sell many items, such as silk and spice from China along this route. The author followed the same route to reach Mount Kailash for Kora. Thus, the title "Silk Road."

2. What was the physical condition of the author in Darchen ?

Ans: In Darchen, the author had a disturbing night. He caught a cold, his nostrils blocked and so he faced difficulty while breathing. He was hungry and tired. He couldn't sleep so woke hastily and felt heaviness in his chest. He then sat to clear his nasal passage which relieved him a bit but he didn't sleep as he felt he might die.

3. Why does the narrator think that the snow was dangerous yet beautiful?

Ans: Silk Road by Nick Middleton is a thorough account of the author's visit to Mount Kailash. Tsetan on his way reviewed snow on the path by stomping on it. The snow was not deep enough but they feared the car would turn over in case they slipped and so they flung a handful of dirt across the frozen surface to cover this risk. After that, they were able to drive without any trouble. A few minutes later, they stopped at one more obstruction. This time they determined to drive about the snow. However, the risks did not weaken the attractive beauty of the place. In the valley, they saw

mountains that were covered with snow, and the river was wide but mostly jammed with ice, and sparkling in the sunshine.