



THE VILLAGE
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
"We Nurture Dreams"

The Book that Saved the Earth

Summary

The Book That Saved the Earth is a play written by Claire Bioko. In the twenty-fifth century, while sitting in The Museum of Ancient History, the Historian depicts the story of the Martians who visited Earth in the twentieth century to invade the planet. The play is set in the twentieth century, which was often called the Era of the Book. The play consists of imaginary characters having strange names, such as Mighty Chief Think-Tank, Apprentice Noodle, Captain Omega, Lieutenant Iota and Sergeant Oop.

Think-Tank considers himself the most powerful and intelligent fellow among all the Martians and decides to visit Earth with his team. He always thinks that since he has a big balloon head, he is the most intelligent of all and constantly wants to be praised for it. He and his team are eager to know how the Earthlings (people living on Earth) live and how the Martians can put that planet under the generous Martian rulership. Soon, they arrived at the Centerville Public Library on Earth, which was full of books. However, they are unable to understand the purpose of those objects kept on the shelves.

To exhibit his acumen, the mighty Think-Tank tells his crew that Earthlings are fond of eating, so probably those things arranged on shelves are sandwiches. Soon after, he orders Captain Omega, Lieutenant Iota and Sergeant Oop to eat the book. Captain Omega and Lieutenant Iota cleverly transfer this responsibility of eating the book on Sergeant Oop's shoulders. Having no choice, Sergeant Oop eats a corner of the book, but he does not like the taste. He confirms to the mighty Think-Tank that it is not delicious at all. From this, the crew realises that the book is not meant for eating.

After some time, Apprentice Noodle suggests to the mighty Think-Tank that probably the book is being used for communication with ears. They all tried to

hear the book by holding it close to their ears, yet there was no sound coming from it. Later, Noodle suggests Think-Tank that the book may be used for communication with eyes. The mighty Think-Tank agrees and orders the entire crew members to open and read the book. The name of the book is Mother Goose, which is a children's rhyme book. However, they are unable to understand how to read it.

In no time, Apprentice Noodle reminds Think-Tank that the Mars chemical department has given some vitamin pills to boost the intelligence of the crew. Think-Tank immediately orders his crew to have those pills. The crew pop in the capsules before reading the book. Soon, Sergeant Oop starts reading the nursery rhyme book, and they start taking the literal meaning of lines in the rhymes. He reads the rhyme, Humpty Dumpty, and all of them see the picture of Humpty that resembles Think-Tank.

Seeing this, Think-Tank is horrified to know that Earthlings have identified him already and want to kill him. From all the information gathered about Earthlings, the mighty Think-Tank calls his Martian crew and says they should postpone the idea of invading Earth for the time being. So, he asks his crew to run away from that place immediately without leaving a trace and evacuate the entire planet of Mars. He orders his team to head towards Alpha Centauri, a hundred million miles away. Thus, an old book of rhymes, Mother Goose, saved Earth from the Martian invasion.

The Book That Saved the Earth states how Mother Goose, which is a well-known English nursery rhyme book, saves Planet Earth from a Martian invasion. It teaches students that a person who thinks greatly of himself but has little knowledge can be dangerous.

The Book that Saved the Earth - Important Questions

Short Answer Type Questions

Question 1. Why did Think-Tank wish to contact the space probe?

Answer: Think-Tank wanted to contact the probe to find out what the crew of the probe had observed about Earth.

Question 2. What difficulty do the crew of the space probe face on Earth?

Answer: The space probe lands in a public library. The crew is shocked because the place looked very strange as they had no idea of books. They think the library to be some kind of storage barn.

Question 3. How does Think-Tank explain the books to his probe crew?

Answer: Think-Tank told his crew that the books were sandwiches. He even ordered his crew to eat them. Then, he called them communication devices and later he said that they were meant for watching.

Question 4. Why do the space probe crew take vitamins?

Answer: Think-Tank wanted the probe crew to find out what was in the books. So, the probe crew take vitamins to increase their intelligence. They are able to read the books after taking those vitamins.

Question 5. What is Think-Tank's interpretation of words like 'shells', 'silver bells' and 'garden' from the nursery rhyme? What is its impact?

Answer: Think-Tank interprets the given words to mean that the earthlings grew shells and silver in their gardens. This caused him to withhold their planned invasion of Earth as he felt that Earth was more advanced than Mars.

Question 6. Think-Tank thinks that Earthlings are after him. What is the reason? [CBSE 2015]

Answer: Think-Tank crew read about Humpty-Dumpty's fall in the rhyme and showed the picture to Think-Tank. Think-Tank's head resembled that of Humpty-Dumpty. This makes Think-Tank feel that earthlings were planning to invade Mars and capture him.

Question 7. Mention any two striking qualities of Noodle.

Answer: The apprentice of Think-Tank, Noodle, comes out as an interesting figure in the story. He is very polite and smart. He corrects the mistakes of his ruler very humbly by giving indirect suggestions. Also, he is very wise and well informed.

Question 8. Elaborate the escape that Think-Tank plans for.

Answer: Think-Tank orders his entire fleet to evacuate Mars. He gets a capsule for himself. They decide to move to the distant star Alpha Centauri to escape invasion by earthlings.

Question 9. Describe Think-Tank in your own words.

Answer: Think-Tank is the ruler of the planet Mars. His head is huge and egg shaped. He wears a robe decorated with stars and circles. He is very proud of his intelligence and might.

Question 10. How did one old book of nursery rhymes save the Earth from a Martian invasion? [CBSE 2011]

or

How did a book change Think-Tank's opinion about the Earthlings? [CBSE 2014]

Answer: This book is totally misunderstood by the Martians. The Martians thought that earthlings were planning to invade Mars. So, they cancelled their invasion of Earth and went back. Think-Tank totally misunderstands the book. Phrases like 'shell', 'silver', 'garden' gave him a false idea that earthlings grew silver and weapons. He starts thinking that earthlings are very advanced technologically.

Question 11. What was Oop's opinion about the 'sandwiches' he had eaten?

Answer: Oop was forced to eat 'sandwiches' and he made terrible faces while chewing. He said that it was not delicious; rather as dry as Martian dust. He remarked that he could not understand how the Earthlings could get those 'sandwiches' down without water.

Question 12. What was Noodle's version to describe the so-called 'sandwich'?

Answer: Noodle hesitantly told Think-Tank that he had 'insignificant' information about those 'sandwiches'. He informed him that he had seen surveyor films of those sandwiches. He had noticed that the Earthlings did not eat them. They used them as some sort of communication devices.

Question 13. Why was the twentieth century called the 'Era of the Book'?

Answer: The twentieth century was often called the Era of the book as there were books about everything. Books taught people how, when, where, and why of everything. They illustrated, educated, punctuated, and even decorated.

Question 14. How Does Think-Tank compare the Martians with the people on Earth? What does he call the Earth mockingly?

Answer: Think-Tank considers earth 'a ridiculous little planet' ariel intends to put it under his generous rulership. He feels the earth is actually an unimportant place where ugly earthlings, with their tiny heads, reside. He believes the Martians to be a superior race. He mockingly calls the earth 'Primitive ball of mud'.

Question 15. What saved the Earth? How?

Answer: One dusty old book of nursery rhymes saved the earth from a Martian invasion. The Martian could not decipher the meaning of nursery rhymes. Their misinterpretation made the situation comical. They began to believe that the Earthlings had advance technology and were planning to invade the Mars. They called off their mission and even left the Mars isolated to escape to a far-off planet.

Question 16. Noodle avoids offending Think-Tank but at the same time he corrects his mistakes. How does he manage to do that?

Answer: Noodle avoids offending Think-Tank very meticulously. He never disagrees with his opinion but he does not miss any opportunity to put forward his suggestions no matter even if he does it hesitantly. He always

shows admiration to Think-Tank's intelligence. He never puts himself into the conflicting ideas from his boss.

Question 17. How did the book change Think-Tank's opinion about the Earthlings?

Answer: Think-Tank used to believe that the Martian was a superior race to the Earthlings. But after cracking the so-called code of an old nursery rhyme book, he changed his view about the Earthlings. He now thought that the Earthlings has reached a high level of civilization and planning to invade the Mars. It made him call off his mission.

Question 18. What does Noodle tell Think-Tank about the books?

Answer: Noodle hesitantly informs Think-Tank that the books were a sort of communication device. He told that he had seen surveyor films of those 'sandwiches'. He had noticed that the Earthlings did not eat them. They used them as sort of communication device.

Question 19. Where did Captain Omega reach with her team?

Answer: Captain Omega landed on the earth with her team. They found themselves in the Centerville Public Library amidst thousands of books. They thought they were in some sort of storage bam.

Question 20. Why was the twentieth century called the 'Era of the Book'?

Answer: The twentieth century was often called the 'Era of the book'. In those days, there were books about everything, from anteaters to Zulus. Books taught people how to, when to, where to, and why to. They illustrated, educated, punctuated, and even decorated.

Long Answer Type Questions

Question 1. Noodle hails Think-Tank as the most powerful and intelligent creature in the whole universe. Do you agree? Write your opinion of Think-Tank citing instances from the given text.

Answer: Noodle is a trainee under Think-Tank. He bows before him and hails his ruler as the most powerful and intelligent creature in the universe. However, Think-Tank is not really intelligent. He misinterprets the nursery rhymes completely. 'Silver', 'shells' and 'garden' for him mean that the earthlings are growing metals in farms.

He thinks books to be sandwiches and wants the crew to eat them. When he is read out the nursery rhyme which says, 'Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall' he is terrified and plans his escape from Mars. Thus, Think-Tank is nothing more than a show off and a pompous fool.

Question 2. Mars and Earth become friends. How?

Answer: Think-Tank evacuates Mars and the martians move to Alpha Centauri. They fear an invasion by Earth. In the twenty-fifty century, the two planets become friends. The wise and wonderful Noodle replaces Think-Tank. Earthlings tell Martians the difference between sandwiches and books.

They even taught them how to read. At the same time, they have created a model library for Martians at Marsopolis. Still there is one thing that Martians have never learnt to do. They have never tried to read the nursery rhymes of 'Mother Goose'.

Question 3. Compare and contrast the characters of Noodle and Think-Tank. [CBSE 2012]

Answer: Noodle and Think-Tank have contrasting characters. Think-Tank likes to be called the 'Great and the Mighty'. He orders and commands. He is the ruler of Mars, but has no intelligence.

He thinks books to be sandwiches. He is wrong about everything. He demands that the crew obey him. He likes to pass on other's idea as his own. He is a coward who simply boasts about his power.

Noodle, his apprentice, is very clever and wise. He corrects the mistakes of the ruler (Think-Tank) very gently. He never takes credit for his ideas. But he offers them to the ruler very gently. Think-Tank makes them as his own.

Question 4. The play, 'The Book That Saved the Earth' conveys the message that misunderstanding of cultural differences between various

racers can cause confusion and conflict. Based on your reading of the play, write how such confusion and conflicts can be checked so that peace and harmony is maintained. [CBSE 2015]

Answer: The confusion in the mind of Think-Tank occurred due to the literal interpretation of the nursery rhymes in the book-‘Mother Goose’. To ensure that conflicts are checked so that peace and harmony are maintained, cultural differences should be sorted out by initially sending mature and wise people from one culture to the other to establish contact before deciding to wage war.

Think-Tank had sent an initial probe, but the crew members of the probe were not sufficiently intelligent or mature to understand Earth’s culture. That is why they literally interpreted the nursery rhymes and caused misunderstanding in the mind of Think-Tank.

Question 5. Rushing to conclusion without going into details may lead to chaos and failure. Elaborate this with reference to the Martian invasion in the chapter ‘The Book That Saved the Earth’.

Answer: The Martians were very proud of themselves. Great and mighty Think-Tank regarded as the ruler of Mars was always caught in self praise. He had a quick mind and wishes to attack the earth in a great hurry. Martians misinterpreted the signals received from earthlings book of nursery rhymes and fled away. If they had planned the things decisively things would have been different. In any kind of situation rash decisions would never give results. It is only through knowledge, perseverance.

Question 6. How do the three nursery rhymes frighten Think-Tank in the play, ‘The Book That Saved the Earth’?

Answer: The rhyme ‘Mistress Mary, quite contrary makes Think-Tank believe that the Earthlings have discovered how to combine agriculture and mining. He thinks that they can grow explosives. The rhyme ‘Hey diddle diddle’, makes him conclude that the Earthlings have reached a high level of civilization: even their animals have musical culture and know space techniques.

He fears that at that very moment, the Earthlings might be launching an interplanetary attack of millions of cows. Oop reads the rhyme. ‘Humpty Dumpty’ and shows him a picture of Humpty Dumpty. Think-Tank

concludes that it is his picture and the Earthlings are planning to invade Mars.

Question 7. How did one old book of nursery rhymes save the world from a Martian invasion?

OR

Who tried to invade the earth in the twenty first century and what saved it?

Answer: The Martians sent a mission to invade the earth. The crew landed in a library and could not make out what the books actually were. It was believed that the books were a sort of communication device. Think-Tank asked the members to decipher the code of the 'sandwiches'. The nursery rhymes were totally misinterpreted and it was believed that the Earthlings had developed an advance civilization and mission was called off and the Martians escaped to a remote place to save their lives. Thus the books saved the Earth.

Question 8. What is Think-Tank's opinion about the Earth?

Answer: Think-Tank called the Earth a ridiculous little planet and showed his wish to put it under his generous rulership. The planet Earth was insignificant to him. He believed that the Martians were the most handsome race. He referred to the people of the Earth as Earthlings and mocked their tiny heads.

He showed his desire to invade 'primitive ball of mud' called Earth before lunch. But after misinterpreting the book of nursery rhymes he began to believe that the earthlings had developed a more advanced civilization and were even planning to invade the Mars.

Question 9. Noodle avoids offending Think-Tank but at the same time he corrects his mistakes. How does he manage to do that?

Answer: Noodle avoids offending Think-Tank, but at the same time, he very cleverly tries to correct his mistakes also. Whenever Noodle had to say something contrary to what Think-Tank said, he would present his thoughts by referring to them as being of no particular importance. In this way he would correct Think- Tank's errors without making him feel that he was being corrected. Noodle appears to be quite an expert in handling these kind of people.