

The Accidental Tourist-

The Accidental Tourist

CBSE class - 9



Extra Questions and Notes

INTRODUCTION

This is a narrative piece by Bill Bryson about his experiences during air flights. He has many bad experiences during these flights. He recalls all those experiences and we come to know how he fails to enjoy his air travels and being a frequent traveller not able to get any air card due to his carelessness. He says that travels have never been easy for him.

(इस अध्याय में बिल ब्राईसन हवाई उड़ानों के दौरान अपने अनुभवों का वर्णन करता है। इन उड़ानों के दौरान उसके अनेक बुरे अनुभव हैं। वह उन सभी अनुभवों को स्मरण करता है और हमें पता चलता है कि वह अपनी हवाई यात्राओं का आनंद लेने में कैसे असफल रहता है और एक नियमित यात्री होने के बावजूद भी किस प्रकार से हवाई कार्ड प्राप्त करने में भी असफल रहता है। वह कहता है कि उसके लिए यात्राएँ कभी भी आसान नहीं रही हैं।)

THEME

The story is based on the theme that it is important to be well-planned and organised while travelling. In the absence of preparations before setting off, the traveller is bound to encounter accidents. Bill Bryson carried jumbled articles in his bag while travelling and in the process misplaced the most important ones. He would fumble even while carrying out the simplest tasks and would end up causing some clumsy accident. Another theme of the story is that one should have the humility to admit one's shortcomings. Bryson's ability to laugh at himself

and see his actions in a lighter vein helped him to overcome embarrassment. This cheerful temperament kept him content and he never felt jealous of others.

Justify the title of THE ACCIDENTAL TOURIST

TITLE

The title suggests that the story is about a tourist who is accidental i.e. finds himself involved in difficult or embarrassing situations as a tourist. On reading the text, one finds that the tourist, Bill Bryson, travels frequently but ends up causing one or the other accident every time. He does not learn from his mistakes and keeps repeating the same follies. He forgets to place his frequent flyer card at the proper place, he spills drinks while extending his hand to get one, leaves a big part of his coat outside while closing the door of the car, smudges his light-coloured trousers many times over without realizing it, and many such ordinary things cannot be handled by him without making a mess of them. The title, "The Accidental Tourist" is thus apt because it is amusing to see Bryson getting frequently into accidents at a time when travelling is so easy that it has made the world a small place.

MESSAGE

The story gives the message that one should be mature enough to laugh at one's own follies. This temperament not only eases tense situations but also helps to move on with more important things. Bryson makes up for his lack of grace and confused behaviour by mocking at himself. This not only makes his story funny but also provides comfort as it is normal for all of us to make mistakes. Living in the real world can be confusing for some people like Bryson. However, they can draw joy even from this confusion and let others too laugh along with them.

Justification of the Title

The author is very clumsy in his behaviour during his travels. He commits a lot of accidents while he is travelling. He spills his drinks on the woman sitting in the next seat. While trying to zip his bag he spills all the items on the floor. He experiences many catastrophes while flying on planes. Often, he could not even, locate his hotel room. So, since the author's travels are full of accidents the title is appropriate. Character Sketch Bill Bryson, the narrator: The narrator of the story 'The Accidental Tourist' is a clumsy man who finds it hard to do even simple things, especially while he is travelling. He is neither able to zip his bag properly nor he is able to remember the room number of his hotel. Once he spilt a soft drink on a woman sitting next to him in an aeroplane. He is also not able to use discount cards. He is constantly filled with wonder at the number of things other people do without any evident difficulty. The narrator finds it very hard to carry

on living in the real world. To him, travelling is a challenging task which he cannot go smoothly.

Vocabulary

Outstanding—extraordinary; Constantly—continuously; Beyond—at or to the further side of; Self-locking—automatic lock; Confused—in a fix; Recently—in recent past; Grunt—a low, animal-like noise; Consternation—fear resulting from awareness of danger; Abruptly—suddenly; Extravagant—in disorderly manner; Dumbstruck—surprised; Flutter—flapping; Oblivion—total forgetfulness; Disgorge—to vomit; Cascade—sudden downpour; Gash—deep wound; Hysterics—a wildly emotional or exaggerated reaction; Panic—fear; Exasperation—great irritation; Catastrophe—hard time; Free—not under the control of another; Occasion—event; Attendant—air hostess; Perch—sit; Repeatedly—again; Drench—to make very wet; Thoughtfully—while thinking; Attractive—nice; Scatter—to spread; Lavatory—toilet; Resistant—offering resistance to something; Ache—pain; Seismic—related to earthquake; Trouser—a piece of clothing that covers the whole of your both legs; Hood—a type of cap; Unexpectedly—all of a sudden; Frustration—annoyance; Accumulate—to gather; Entitle—to give the right to have or do something; Venerable—impressive by reason of age.

Summary:

Bill Bryson was a frequent air traveller. He finds himself always uneasy during his air travels. In this lesson, the author describes some of his experiences during

these travels. He says that once he was going to England with his family. He had a carry-on bag with him.

The trouble started at the airport when the checking staff asked him to open the bag. He tried hard to open the zip of the bag but it would not open. He pulled it harder and it broke. All the things in the bag were discharged like a fluttery cascade. The newspaper cuttings, other documents, the tin of pipe tobacco, magazines, passport and coins all spread over an area about the size of a tennis court.

Then he describes his another experience. He says that once on an aeroplane, he leaned over to tie a shoelace. Just at the moment someone in the seat ahead of him threw his seat back into full recline and found himself pinned helplessly in the crash position. It was only by clawing the leg of the man sitting next to him that he managed to get himself freed.

On another occasion, he knocked a soft drink onto the lap of a lady. He repeated this mischief many times. But it was not his worst experience on the aeroplane. He says that his worst experience took place on a plane flight. He says that he was writing something in a notebook. He fell into conversation with an attractive young lady in the next seat. He was sucking his pen on one of the ends. After about 20 minutes, when he went to lavatory he discovered that the pen had leaked and that his mouth, chin, tongue, teeth and gums were now navy blue and would remain so for several days.

Despite being a frequent flyer he never got any air card. He says that he used to fly 100,000 miles a year but due to his carelessness or some other reasons he could get no air card.

SUMMARY IN HINDI

बिल ब्राईसन एक बार-बार हवाई यात्रा करने वाला यात्री था। वह अपनी हवाई यात्राओं के दौरान स्वयं को असुखद स्थितियों में पाता है। इस अध्याय में लेखक इन उड़ानों के दौरान अपने कुछ अनुभवों का वर्णन करता है। वह कहता है कि एक बार वह अपने परिवार के साथ इंग्लैंड जा रहा था। उसके पास एक थैला था। परेशानी उस समय आरंभ हुई जब हवाई अड्डे पर निरीक्षण करने वाले कर्मचारियों ने उसे थैला खोलने के लिए कहा। उसने थैले की जिप को खोलने की पूरी कोशिश की परंतु जिप नहीं खुली। उसने उसे जोर से खींचा तथा वह टूट गई। थैले के अंदर रखी सारी चीजें एक फड़फड़ाते हुए छोटे झरने के समान नीचे जा गिरीं। समाचार पत्र की कतरनें, अन्य दस्तावेज, सिगार के तंबाकू की डिब्बी, पत्रिकाएं, पासपोर्ट और सिक्के टेनिस कोर्ट के आकार जितने क्षेत्र में बिखर गए।

तब वह अपने दूसरे अनुभव का वर्णन करता है। वह कहता है कि एक बार एक हवाई जहाज पर वह अपने जूते के फीते को बाँधने के लिए नीचे झुका। उसी क्षण अगली सीट पर बैठे व्यक्ति ने अपनी सीट को पूरा नीचे की ओर कर दिया और उसने स्वयं को कुचली हुई स्थिति में असहाय पाया। तब अपने से आगे बैठे व्यक्ति की टांग पर नाखून से काटकर वह अपने-आपको उस स्थिति से मुक्त करा सका।

दूसरे अवसर पर उसने एक महिला यात्री के ऊपर शीतल पेय की बोतल उड़ेल दी। उसने इस शरारत को कई वार किया। लेकिन यह उसका वायुयान पर सबसे बुरा अनुभव नहीं था। उसका सबसे बुरा अनुभव भी एक हवाई उड़ान के दौरान ही हुआ था।

वह बताता है कि वह एक कॉफी में कुछ लिख रहा था। वह अपने से अगली सीट पर बैठी एक युवा महिला के साथ बातचीत करने लग गया। वह एक सिरे से अपने पेन को मुंह में डालकर चूस रहा था। लगभग 20 मिनट के पश्चात जब शौचालय गया तो उसने पाया कि उसका पैन लीक हो गया था और उसका मुंह, ठोड़ी, जीभ, दांत और मसूढ़े गहरे नीले रंग के हो गए और वे कई दिनों तक ऐसे ही रहे थे।

बार-बार हवाई यात्रा करने वाला यात्री होने के बावजूद भी उसे कोई हवाई यात्रा कार्ड नहीं मिला। वह कहता है कि वह एक वर्ष में एक लाख मील की हवाई यात्रा कर लेता था, लेकिन अपनी लापरवाही या अन्य कारणों से उसे कोई भी हवाई कार्ड नहीं मिला।

EXTRACTS

The zip on the bag was jammed. So I pulled on it and yanked at it, with grunts and frowns and increasing consternation. I kept this up for some minutes but it wouldn't budge, so I pulled harder and harder.

1. Which bag is being referred to in this extract?

Ans: The carry-on bag that was hanging around Bryson's neck when he reached the Logan Airport in Boston on way to Europe along with his family is being referred to here.

2. What had happened to the zip on the bag?

Ans: The zip on the bag had got jammed and could not be opened in spite of the hard efforts of Bryson.

3. Why did Bryson want to open the bag?

Ans: Bryson wanted to open the bag to take out his frequent flyer card and avail its benefits.

4. What happened when Bryson pull harder and harder at the zip?

Ans: When Bryson pulled harder and harder at the zip, the bag gave way abruptly and its entire contents spilt over, creating a mess.

(II)

I would love, just once in my life, to rise from a dinner table without looking as if I have just experienced an extremely localized seismic event, get in a car and close the door without leaving 14 inches of coat outside, wear light-coloured trousers without discovering at the end of the day that I have at various times sat on chewing gum, ice cream, cough syrup and motor oil.

Who makes this wish and why?

Ans: Bill Bryson, the accidental tourist, makes this wish because he desires to behave like other normal people whom he sees carrying out routine actions with ease.

2. Explain: 'extremely localized seismic event'.

Ans: The phrase, in a literal sense, means a kind of earthquake that affects a very small area. This is Bryson's way of humorously describing the mess that he left behind after eating dinner.

3. How does the speaker wish to sit in a car?

Ans: The speaker, Bryson, wishes to sit in a car without leaving out any part of his coat while closing the door.

4. What does the writer find on his light-coloured trousers at the end of the day?
What does this show about his character?

Ans: The writer finds stains of chewing gum, ice cream, cough syrup and motor oil on his light-coloured trousers at the end of the day. This shows that he is very clumsy in his manners and very careless in using public places.

(III)

Of course, this is only when I am flying with my family. When I am on my own, I don't eat, drink or lean over to tie my shoelaces, and never put a pen anywhere near my mouth.

What is 'this' as mentioned by Bryson?

Ans: 'This' here means the instruction given by Bryson's wife to his children. According to this instruction, his children would open the lids of food for Bryson when travelling.

2. Why doesn't Bryson lean over to tie his shoelaces when he is on his own?

Ans: Bryson had once got trapped in a crash position while tying his shoelace on an aeroplane. He doesn't lean over to tie his shoelaces in order to avoid his earlier mistake.

3. Why does Bryson avoid putting a pen near his mouth?

Ans: Bryson had once put his pen in his mouth while talking to a charming female co-passenger. He discovered 20 minutes later that the pen had leaked and his entire face was navy blue. He avoided a pen near his mouth after that to save himself from further embarrassment.

4. Why wouldn't Bryson eat or drink when travelling alone?

Ans: Bryson wouldn't eat or drink when travelling alone because he was clumsy and prone to accidents. While lifting a glass of soft drink or any other food item, he would create a mess all over.

(IV)

Everyone I know – everyone – is forever flying off to Bali first class with their air miles. I never get to collect anything. I must fly 100,000 miles a year, yet I have accumulated only about 212 air miles divided between twenty-three airlines.

According to Bryson, what is everyone doing?

Ans: According to Bryson, everyone he knows is forever flying off to Bali first class with their air miles.

2. Is there an exaggeration in this statement?

Ans: Identify it. The exaggeration in this statement is that 'everyone is forever flying'. This is an expression to emphasize the difference between the flying patterns of others with that of Bryson. In reality, everyone cannot fly forever.

3. Why ha: Bryson accumulated only about 212 air miles?

Ans: Bryson has accumulated only about 212 air miles because he either forgets to ask for the air miles when he checks in or the airlines fail to record them due to the mismatch of names on his card and tickets.

4. How do the above lines support the fact that Bryson flies a lot?

Ans: The above lines mention that Bryson flies 100,000 miles a year via twenty-three airlines. This shows that he flies a lot.

Main Characters of the Story

Bill Bryson

Bill Bryson reflects on his experiences as a traveller and gives us a glimpse of himself as a fun-loving and jovial person. He evaluates his behaviour in an objective way and admits to all his shortcomings. He admits that he gets confused easily and cannot remember even the most routine things like a lavatory in a cinema or the number of his room in the hotel.

He is unorganized and unsorted while travelling. He carries a hundred articles in his bag but fails to find the most important one. Sometimes he is careful about saving money as he carries tobacco with him while going to England and at other times misses his chance to get frequent flyer miles.

He is clumsy while picking up things and spills the drink twice on his co-passenger. Bryson gets hysterical on seeing his own blood but is not affected much when it comes to others.

He tries to be polite and respectful with women co-travellers but his accidental nature spoils his suave appearance. The manner in which he gets navy blue ink all over his face proves this.

Bill is a tolerant person and does not feel offended when his wife asks his children to put the lid off the food for him. He does note that other people fly first class to far off places like Bali via earning frequent flyer points but does not feel jealous. He knows that it is because of his own disorganized and haphazard style that he fails to avail such an opportunity. Overall, Bryson appears as a happy-go-lucky person who has no complaints whatsoever.

Very Short Answer Type Important Questions

1. Who was Bill Bryson?

Ans. Bill Bryson was a frequent air traveller.

2. How did Bill Bryson find himself during his air travels?

Ans. He found himself always uneasy during his air travels.

3. Where was Bill going when the zip of his carry bag broke?

Ans. At that time he was going to England.

4. What happened when the zip of the bag gave way?

Ans. Everything within the bag—newspaper cuttings, other loose papers, tin pipe tobacco, magazines, passport, English money—ejected on the road.

5. What happened to Bill's finger?

Ans. Bill gashed his finger on the zip and blood was shedding in a lavish manner.

6. Why did Bill lean over in the plane?

Ans. He leaned over in the plane to tie a shoelace.

7. What did Bill do to the lady travelling with him on one of his plane journeys?

Ans. He knocked a soft drink over the lap of the lady twice.

8. What happened when Bill's pen leaked?

Ans. His mouth, Chin, tongue, teeth and gums were now a striking scrub-resistant navy blue.

9. Who was the accidental tourist?

Ans. Bill Bryson was the accidental tourist.

10. What type of person was Bill Bryson?

Ans. He was a confused person.

Short Answer Type Questions (30 to 40 words)

Q.1. What does Bill Bryson tell us about his habit of getting confused?

Ans. Bill Bryson says that he gets easily confused at the things which the other people enjoy performing them. He says that he can't remember the things for long. He forgets them again and again. He gives an example that when he is staying at some hotel he has to come to the reception counter two or three times to ask the number of his room.

Q.2. What happened at London Airport when the author was going to England on a long journey with family?

Ans. When the author was going to England on a long journey, he got in a troublesome situation at the London Airport. He had put his visiting card in the carry-on bag. When he tried to open it, it would not open because its zip got jammed. When he pulled it hard, it broke and all the contents of the bag disgorged on the ground.

Q.3. Narrate briefly the incident of spilling a soft drink on to a co-passenger in a plane by the author.

Ans. During one of his air flights, the author spilt the soft drink on to the lap of a sweet lady sitting beside him. The flight attendant came and cleaned her up. The attendant brought him a replacement drink and he knocked it into the woman again. The lady looked at him with the stupefied expression.

Q.4. What two reasons does Bill Bryson give for the absence of air miles cards with the hint?

Ans. He says that he is a frequent flyer. He must fly one lac miles a year. But he does not have more air miles cards. It is so because he forgets to ask for the air miles when he buys a ticket. And sometimes the clerk at the air-station makes an excuse of non-availability of the air miles cards.

Q5. What is the 'most outstanding thing' that the writer, Bill Bryson, thinks he is not good at? What does this reveal about Bryon's traits?

Ans: The writer, Bill Bryson, thinks that the 'most outstanding thing' he is not good at is living in the real world. This reveals that he is so lost in his own thoughts that he fails to conduct himself like a normal person and ends up causing accidents.

Q6. Bill Bryson says, "I am, in short, easily confused". What examples has he given to justify this?
(Textual)

Ans: Bill Bryson supports his tendency to get confused easily by giving examples like his failure to look for a lavatory in a cinema. Instead, he ends up standing in the alley on the wrong side of a self-locking door. Another example is about his returning to hotel desks two or three times a day and enquiring about his room number.

Q7. Which two things did Bryson remember at the Logan Airport in Boston?

Ans: At the Logan Airport in Boston, Bryson remembered that he had recently joined the British Airways' frequent flyer programme. He also remembered that he had put the card in the carry-on bag that was hanging around his neck.

Q8. What started the trouble for Bryson at the Logan Airport in Boston?

Ans: The jammed zip of Bryson's carry-on bag started trouble for him at the Logan Airport in Boston. He tried to open it using force and as a result, it gave way abruptly. Hundreds of items in the bag spilt over and created a mess.

Q9. What happened when Bryson pulled hard at the zip on his bag?

Or

What happens when the zip on Bryson's carry-on bag gives way?
(Textual)

Ans: Bryson's side of the bag opened abruptly and its contents got scattered all over when he pulled hard at its zip. Newspaper cuttings, loose papers, tobacco tin, magazines, passport, English money, film – everything inside the bag spread over an area about the size of a tennis court.

Q10. How did the contents of Bryson's bag spill away at the Logan Airport? What was his reaction to it?

Ans: Hundreds of contents in Bryson's bag spilt away when the side of the bag opened up abruptly. The coins tinkled as they bounced noisily. The lid of the tobacco tin came off and the tobacco got ejected when the lidless tin rolled. Bryson was dumbstruck to see his belongings rolling away.

Q11. "My tobacco!" I cried in honour. Why does Bryson say so?

Ans: Bryson says so because tobacco was many times costlier in England, especially after the recently passed budget. He was horrified at his monetary loss when he saw the tobacco getting ejected from the lidless tin.

Q12. Why is Bryson's finger bleeding? What is his wife's reaction?
(Textual)

Ans: Bryson's finger is bleeding because he has gashed it on the zip of his carry-on bag while attempting to open it. His wife's reaction is of plain wonder, devoid of any anger or exasperation. She couldn't believe he did such clumsy things.

Q13. 'Why did Bryson's hair go into panic mode?

Ans: Bryson's hair went into panic mode because he was confused and unable to help himself in controlling the situation that resulted after he ripped open his carry-on bag. All the contents of his bag were on the floor and his finger was bleeding.

Q14. How does Bill Bryson end up in a 'crash position' in the aircraft?
(Textual)

Ans: Once on an aeroplane, Bryson had leaned over to tie a shoelace. At this time the person in the seat ahead of him threw back his seat into full recline, pinning Bryson helplessly in a crash position.

Q15. How did Bryson drench his lady co-passenger twice?

Ans: Once, Bryson accidentally knocked off a soft drink onto the lap of a sweet little lady, a nun, sitting beside him. The flight attendant cleaned her up and brought a replacement drink for Bryson. The accidental tourist as Bryson was, he knocked it off again thus drenching his co-passenger twice.

Q16. What was the worst experience of Bryson while on a flight?

Or

Why are Bryson's teeth and gums navy blue?

(Textual)

Ans: Bryson's worst experience while on a flight was when his teeth and gums turned navy blue. This happened because the end of the pen on which he had been sucking thoughtfully, had leaked. The worst part was that he discovered this only after twenty minutes of conversation with an attractive lady in the seat next to him.

Q17. Bill Bryson "ached to be suave". Is he successful in his mission?

List his 'unsuave' ways.

(Textual)

Ans: Bill Bryson was a person prone to accidents. Whenever he tried to be suave, he would cause yet another accident. His unsuave ways included littering food at the dining-table, getting his coal trapped while closing the car door, and smudging his light-coloured trousers.

Q18. Why do you think Bill Bryson's wife says to the children, "Take the lids off the food for daddy"?

(Textual)

Ans: Responding humorously to her husband's accidental tendencies, Bryson's wife tells her children to take the lids off the food for their daddy. She knew from experience that Bill was likely to topple the food and create a mess if he would be allowed to unpack it himself.

Q19. What measures did the writer adopt when he travelled alone?

Ans: The writer, Bill Bryson, would not drink or lean over to tie his shoelaces and never put a pen near his mouth when he travelled alone. He would just sit very quietly and control his hands from accidentally spilling over things.

Q20. Why could Bryson not get his frequent flyer miles?

Ans: Bryson could not get his frequent flyer miles because either he forgot to produce the card when required or forgot to ask for air miles when he checked in. Besides, the airline failed to record his account because his name on the card and ticket did not match.

Q21. Why was Bryson refused air miles when on a flight to Australia?

Ans: Bryson was refused air miles when on a flight to Australia because his card was in the name W. Bryson while the ticket was for B. Bryson. This mismatch in names made his claim to air miles invalid.

Q22. Why does Bryson not feel bad about flying to Bali first class?

Ans: Bryson does not feel bad about flying to Bali first class because he had decided, as a precaution, not to eat anything when flying alone. The flight to Bali was a long distance and he knew he could never go that long without eating.

Q23. Why does Bryson find it difficult to do even the most routine things?

Ans: Bill Bryson is a careless and unorganised person. He is also clumsy in his manners and hence finds it difficult to do even the most routine things. Besides, he does not take these shortcomings seriously. He laughs at himself and does not even try to correct his mistakes.

Q24. Bill Bryson says, "I am, in short, easily confused." What examples has he given to justify this?

Ans. Bill Bryson never had a pleasant journey. He got easily confused. Citing examples, he said that he could not easily find lavatory in a cinema hall and finally found himself standing nearby a self-locking door. At the hotels too, he asked his room number many a time in a day.

Q25. How does Bill Bryson end up in a “Crash position” in the aircraft?

Ans. Once while he was travelling in an aeroplane, he leaned over to tie up his shoelaces. As soon as he leaned over for this purpose, someone in the seat ahead of him threw his seat back. Thus, the author ended up in a “crash position”.

Q26. Why is Bill Bryson’s finger bleeding? What is his wife’s reaction?

Ans. The author tried to open his carry bag to find out his discount card. The zip got jammed. He tried to open it and got a long deep cut in his finger. It started bleeding. His wife looked at him with an expression of wonder. She remarked, “I can’t believe you do this for a living”.

Q27. Why do Bill Bryson’s teeth and gums look navy blue?

Ans. Bill Bryson was writing some important thoughts in a notebook. In between, he was sucking on the end of his pen. He fell into conversation with an attractive lady. He amused the lady for more than twenty minutes. He did not realise that

his pen had leaked. When he retired to the lavatory, he found his teeth and gums navy blue.

Q28. Why did Bill Bryson return to the hotel desk frequently?

Ans. The author was a confused person. He used to forget things. While staying in a hotel, he used to forget his room number. He had to return to the hotel desk frequently to ask what his room number was.

Q29. Why did the author, Bill Bryson, cry “My finger! My finger”?

Ans. While opening the bag, the zip got jammed. He tried to open it forcefully. His finger got a sharp cut and started bleeding. When he saw blood oozing out of the finger, he started crying “my finger! my finger!”.

Q30. What were the things that rained out of Bill Bryson’s bag at the airport?

Ans. When the author tried to open his bag, the zip got jammed. He pulled it harder. It broke and the bag opened abruptly. It had newspaper cuttings, a tin of

pipe tobacco, magazines, passport, money, films, etc. which rained down from the bag.

Q31. Bill Bryson “ached to be suave”. Is he successful in his mission? List his ‘unsuave’ ways.

Ans. It is quite clear that Bill Bryson ached to be suave. He is not successful in his mission. He got himself in a car and closed the door leaving 14 inches of coat outside, wore light-coloured trousers without discovering at the end of the day that he had at various times sat on chewing gum, ice cream, cough syrup and motor oil.

Q32. Why do you think Bill Bryson’s wife says to the children, “Take the lids off the food for Daddy”?

Ans. Bill Bryson’s wife was aware of the travelling habits of her husband. To avoid any awkward situation, she says, “Take the lids off the food for Daddy” as she did not like her husband to take the lid off the food in his particular style.

Q33. What is the significance of the title, “The Accidental Tourist”?

Ans. The title is quite significant. After going through the whole story, it becomes quite vivid that Bill Bryson is the accidental tourist. There are various such examples which prove the appropriateness of the title. The title itself suggests the various strange and accidental experiences of the author while travelling.

Q34. What happens when the zip on Bill Bryson's carry-on bag gives way?

Ans. The author was going on a weeklong trip to England, with his family by air. When they were checking in at Logan Airport in Boston, the author tried to open his bag forcefully. The side of the bag flew open and all his important items fell out in the open. Newspaper cuttings, tobacco packet, passport, money, etc. rained out over an area about the size of a tennis court.

Q35. Why does the author, Bill Bryson, not eat or drink while travelling alone?

Ans. The author always does mischief while eating or drinking on a flight. He had faced many awkward and embarrassing situations while on the flight. So now he does not eat or drink while travelling alone.

Q36. What was the narrator's dream? Why did he not achieve it?

Ans. The narrator always wanted to be the frequent flyer miles. But he was very forgetful and careless. He had issued a card indicating distance but never found his card in time. This act of him frustrated him many times. So, he was not successful to use the frequent flyer miles.

Q37. What happened to the narrator when he was going to Australia?

Ans. The narrator was a very forgetful and careless person. Once he planned to fly one lakh miles a year. But he could gather only 212 air miles. Besides, on the way to Australia, he failed to use his card. He was issued his card in the name of W. Bryson when his ticket was issued in the name of B. Bryson. So, he failed to use his card again.

Q38. What was the author's worst experience on a plane flight?

Ans. He was sucking on the end of his pen while writing important thoughts. He was involved in talking with an attractive lady and could not notice the leakage in the pen. It became his worst experience when he found his teeth, chin, tongue and gums navy blue.

ESSAY TYPE QUESTIONS

Q.1. How would you describe Bill Bryson as an accidental tourist? Give two instances from the text.

Ans. Bill Bryson was such a tourist who remained almost all the year round on an aeroplane. Many accidents take place with him. So he is called an accidental tourist. The two incidents from the text are mentioned below.

(i) When the zip on his carry-on bag gives way all things fall out of a bag. The newspaper cuttings and other documents rain down in a fluttery cascade. The coins bounce here and there. The lidless tin of tobacco rolls crazily disgorging its contents. These things spread over an area about the size of a tennis court.

(ii) During one of his air flights, the author spilt the soft drink on to the lap of a sweet lady sitting beside him. The flight attendant came and cleaned her up. The attendant brought him a replacement drink and he knocked it into the woman again. The lady looked at him with the stupefied expression.

Q2. Bring out the humour in the story "The Accidental Tourist".

Ans: "The Accidental Tourist" is a humorous account of the different accidents caused by an ever confused and clumsy person. Bill Bryson, the writer who recounts the mishaps, shares his experiences in a light-hearted manner. While explaining how he littered the contents of his carry-on bag in his attempt to find his flyer miles card, he refers to the contents as 'a hundred carefully sorted documents'. When he gashes his finger on the zip, he justifies his hysterics on seeing his own blood. He's getting himself pinned in a crash position while tying shoelaces is yet another funny encounter. His worst experience was when he covered his mouth, chin, tongue, teeth and gums navy blue by sucking thoughtfully on the end of his pen. He looked like a clown with his ink-stained mouth. Further, the list of 'important thoughts' that he mentions were actually reminders to buy socks and to clutch drinks carefully. His wife's instruction to his children to open lids off food for him adds to the tongue-in-cheek flavour of the story. His failure to get flyer miles because his name on the card did not match his name on the ticket is yet another comical episode.

To top everything, his reason for not flying to Bali as he cannot remain without food for that long is very amusing indeed.

Q3. What is the significance of the title?
(Textual)

Ans: The title is significant as it points directly to the many accidents caused by Bryson during his tours. He admits that he always has catastrophes when he travels. He ends up spilling drinks on co-passengers and lets lids or food pieces fly while having meals; He cannot even unzip his bag, put his flyer card at an easily reachable place, and wield his pen without covering his mouth in ink or tie his shoelaces properly. All his efforts to be suave fail and every tour end on a note of comical disaster. Still, he continues to travel almost 100,000 miles a year. When he is on a tour with his family, his wife and children do his little tasks to avoid accidents. When touring alone, he just sits still lest he causes some unexpected mess. He is an accidental tourist who can make even a nun swear by drenching her twice; accidentally of course.

Q4. How did Bill Bryson offend his lady co-passenger in a flight?

Ans: Once, Bryson knocked off a soft drink onto the lap of a sweet little lady sitting beside him. However, the flight attendant quickly cleaned her up and brought another drink for him. But he was careless and clumsy as ever and instantly knocked off the replacement as well on the poor woman. He wondered how he had done this but could never figure out. He felt as if his limbs disobeyed him and behaved like those he sees in horror films. The lady who had been drenched twice got so offended that she gave Bryson a stunned expression and

uttered some curse. She was a nun and Bryson had never heard a nun using such a language in a public place. Bryson's gawky behaviour made even a nun lose her patience.

Q5. What was Bryson's worst experience while flying? Why?

Ans: Once on a flight, Bryson had been writing something when he began to suck on the end of his pen. Without realising that his pen was leaking and smearing his mouth, teeth, gums, tongue and chin, he entered into a conversation with an attractive lady in the next seat. He tried to amuse her for almost twenty minutes by telling jokes and felt that he had perhaps impressed her. However, when he retired to the lavatory, he discovered that the ink over his face was a striking navy blue and scrub-resistant. It was going to remain like that for several days. This experience not only wrecked his image in the eyes of that attractive woman but he also had to live with his funny face for some days. Certainly, no other experience could have been worse than this.

Q6. What ordeal did Bryson have to face at Logan Airport in Boston?

Ans: Bryson always wanted to travel in a smart and seamless way as many others did but simply could not, thanks mainly to his clumsy, furtive and fumbling behaviour.

For example, he got into a very awkward and embarrassing situation at Logan Airport in Boston. It all began when he expressed his desire to redeem his frequent flyer points at the British Airways ticket counter, for which he needed his card.

The thought of redeeming the points was matched in its suddenness by the thought that he had packed the card in his carry-on bag. That is when the real drama, real trouble and real embarrassment began for him.

To his ill-luck, the zip on the bag was jammed. No amount of pulling and yanking at it with grunts and frown would budge it. Harder pulls with more grunts caused the zip to give way and the side of the bag flew open and out came newspaper cuttings, loose papers, magazines, passport, a 14-ounce tin of pipe tobacco, English money and film. All these things were strewn over an area the size of a tennis court, even as Bryson watched helpless and dumbstruck.

The lidless tobacco tin rolled crazily across the concourse spilling its contents as it went. Even as Bryson was regretting and assessing his loss, he was shocked to discover that the zip fiasco had caused one of his fingers to bleed. The lavish flow of blood from the wound proved to be the last straw in Bryson's ordeal at the Logan Airport, Boston. He became hysterical, confused and panicky.

Q7. Laughing at one's own follies helps reduce the gravity of situations that might otherwise cause serious trouble. Discuss in light of the story "The Accidental Tourist".

Ans: Bill Bryson was a careless and clumsy person who could not behave in public places as per the expected code of conduct. He could spill soft drinks on co-passengers, litter the airlines counter with the contents of his carry-on bag, and create a mess while eating. In the process, he not only destroyed his belongings but also created troubles for others. However, his ability to laugh at his own follies helps reduce the gravity of situations that could have otherwise caused serious trouble. The extent to which he offends the nun on whom he spills the drink twice could have led to grave penalty if he had not laughed off at his ungraceful action. The airlines could have barred him because of the number of accidents he had caused on every flight. It was Bryson's faculty of mocking at his errors that sailed him through all the difficulties he had landed himself in.

Q8. Bill Bryson was a clumsy traveller. Write down his worst experiences on a plane flight.

Ans. The author had faced many bad experiences but he did not consider the worst. His worst experience was when he tried to write something in a notebook. He was sucking on the end of his pen. He got involved in talking with a lady and could not notice the leakage in the pen. He kept amusing her for perhaps 20 minutes. When he visited lavatory, he found his mouth, chin, tongue, teeth and gums navy blue. He became very much confused and wanted to mend his habits. The author considered it worst as he could not open his mouth even to talk for many days. One can easily imagine how critical the condition was. He wanted to do all jobs properly. He took precautions to avoid an accident.

Q9. Even simple things like closing a zipper of a bag was a challenging task for Bill Bryson. How did the zip create troubles for the author while travelling in an aeroplane?

Ans. The zip created a lot of troubles for the author. At Logan Airport in Boston, the author wanted to take his card out of the bag. It was here where the trouble started. He found his zip jammed. He made all efforts to pull it. When he tried to pull it forcefully, it gave way and the bag flew open. All his belongings fell on the ground. He cried for his tin of pipe tobacco. He did not like to pay more money to buy tobacco in England. He diverted his attention to his finger. He started crying on seeing the blood shedding. At this, his wife looked at him with an expression of wonder and remarked, "I can't believe you do this for a living." All this proves that the zip created a lot of problems for the author.

Q10. 'Confusing and ill-behaved persons become a laughing stock. Discuss the statement with reference to the story The Accidental Tourist'.

Ans. One must be well-behaved, well-mannered and full of confidence to maintain one's image in gathering. A confusing person due to lack of confidence becomes a laughing stock in many situations. As in the story, the author Bill Bryson is always desirous to project himself as a well behaved, well-mannered person, a person full of confidence but in doing so, all the time, he commits funny mistakes. He is a frequent flyer but forgets to use frequent flyer card issued by airways. He forgets to tie shoelaces, he scatters his soft drink on co-passenger. He puts the end of his pen into his mouth and begins sucking and gets his mouth, tongue, teeth and

gums strained in navy blue colour. The author is very intelligent. He is a man of letters. He is a well known and renowned writer but his tendency of forgetfulness and lack of confidence bring him in the situation of embarrassment.

Q11. "I always have catastrophes when I travel." Mention two incidents to show why Bill Bryson feels so.

Ans. The author had faced many bad experiences while travelling. Once he tried to write something in a notebook. He was sucking on the end of his pen. He got involved in talking with a lady for about 20 minutes and could not notice the leakage in the pen. When he visited lavatory, he found his mouth, chin, tongue, teeth and gums navy blue. Another incident when Bryson got into trouble because of his absent-mindedness. At Logan Airport, he was trying to open the jammed zip of the bag to take out his card. But the zip gave way and all his things scattered on the floor. He became very much confused and wanted to mend his habits.

Q12. Bill Bryson in 'The Accidental Tourist' feels he should become suave. Give some measures by which he can become suave and smart.

Ans. Bill Bryson was an accidental tourist. He tried to do all things properly. But he could not do so and got easily confused. Whenever he travelled by air he did one or the other mischief. His memory was not sharp. He forgot soon and returned to the hotel desk frequently just to ask his room number. He tried to take precautions while taking meal but it also proved to be a mistake. He could not avoid making mistakes. He stopped eating or drinking on a plane. He tried to mend his habits. He wanted to be civilised and polite but it did not happen. He was not capable of getting the benefits offered by different airlines. He had to face embarrassment many times. He could not find lavatory easily.

Q13. "I can't believe you do this for a living." Why does Bill Bryson's wife tell him this?

Ans. The narrator got into problems while travelling with his family. He never had a peaceful journey. He shared his experience in this regard. At Logan Airport in Boston, he tried to get his card out of the bag. But he found the zip jammed. He made every effort to pull it again and again. At last, the zip gave way and all his things lay scattered on the floor. He got confused. At another time on an aeroplane, he leaned forward to lace up his shoes. As soon as he moved forward the fellow traveller threw his seat back. He described how he got his teeth navy blue. His wife knew his habits so she asked her children to take the lids off the food for daddy. She knew his particular style. So, the narrator thought of not eating or drinking while travelling with his family. So his wife tells him this.

QUICK REVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

1. What type of man was Bill Bryson?

(A) determined

(B) easily confused

(C) sure

(D) all of the above

Ans. (B) easily confused

2. On what occasions did the author go on a big trip?

(A) Easter

(B) New Year Day

(C) Christmas

(D) His birthday

Ans (A) Easter

3. The author had joined the frequent flyer programme of :

(A) Boston Airways

(B) French Airways

(C) British Airways

(D) American Airways

Ans. (C) British Airways

4. What happened to the zip on the bag?

(A) it got jammed

(B) it got free

(C) it was fine

(D) none of the above

Ans. (A) it got jammed

5.What came out of the bag when the zip gave way?

(A) newspaper cutting

(B) magazines

(C) english money

(D) all of the above

Ans. (D) all of the above

6.The author was bleeding lavishly in his :

(A) arm

(B) leg

(C) finger

(D) toe

Ans. (C) finger

7. Who was along with Bill Bryson when he disgorged all the things on the road??

(B) wife

(D) friend

(A) son

(C) daughter

Ans. (B) wife

8. Bill Bryson mainly travelled by:

(A) aeroplane

(B) ship

(C) bus

(D) train

Ans (A) aeroplane

9. What did Bill Bryson drop on a sweet lady sitting beside him on an air journey?

(A) soft drink

(B) tea

(C) coffee

(D) dishes

Ans. (A) soft drink

10. After an accident on the plane, the author's teeth looked.

(A) green

(B) red

(C) ivory white

(D) navy blue

Ans. (D) navy blue

11. What was Bill doing when he was crushed under a scat?

(A) leaning to tie his laces

(B) searching a coin

(C) reading a piece of paper

(D) learning aimlessly

Ans. (A) leaning to tie his laces

12. What was Bill's nature?

(A) clear minded

(B) frustrated

(C) intelligent

(D) all of the above

Ans. (B) frustrated

13. Bill travelled a lot by air. Did he entitle to any free air miles?

(A) yes

(B) no

(C) maybe

(D) not known

Ans. (B) no

14. What type of tourist was Bill?

(A) confirmed

(B) pleasant

(C) accidental

(D) risky

Ans. (C) accidental

15. Who is the author of the lesson 'The Accidental Tourist'?

(A) Bill Bryson

(B) William Bryson

(C) Dill Bryson

(D) none of the above

Ans. (A) Bill Bryson