

**CBSE Class-7 English**  
**NCERT solution**  
**An Alien Chapter - 6**  
**I Want Something in a Cage**

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**Page No: 38**

**Comprehension Check**

**1. Write 'True' or 'False' against each of following statements.**

- (i) Mr Purcell sold birds, cats, dogs and monkeys.**
- (ii) He was very concerned about the well-being of the birds and animals in his shop.**
- (iii) He was impressed by the customer who bought the two doves.**
- (iv) He was a successful shopowner, though insensitive and cold as a person.**

**Ans: (i) True**

**(ii) False**

**(iii) False**

**(iv) False**

**2. Why is Mr Purcell compared to an owl?**

**Ans:** Mr Purcell compared to an owl because large glasses magnified his eyes which gives him the appearance of a wise and genial owl.

**3. From the third paragraph pick out**

- (i) words associated with cries of birds,**
- (ii) words associated with noise,**
- (iii) words suggestive of confusion and fear.**

**Ans: (i) whispered twitters, cheeps, squeaks**

**(ii) Rustling, squeals, squeaks**

**(iii) frantic, frightened, bewildered, blindly seeking.**

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**Page No: 39**

**4. "...Mr Purcell heard it no more than he would have heard the monotonous ticking of a familiar clock." (Read para beginning with "It was a rough day...")**

**(i) What does 'it' refer to?**

**(ii) Why does Mr Purcell not hear 'it' clearly?**

**Ans: (i)** 'It' refers to the chirping, squeaking and mewing of the birds and animals in the shop of Mr Purcell.

**(ii)** Mr Purcell does not hear 'it' clearly because he heard it no more than he would have heard the monotonous ticking of a familiar clock and paid no attention to it as it was a daily routine.

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**Page No: 42**

### **Comprehension Check**

**1. Do you think the atmosphere of Mr Purcell's shop was cheerful or depressing? Give reasons for your answer.**

**Ans:** The atmosphere of Mr Purcell's shop was depressing because a constant stir of movement that pervaded his shop and the animals and birds were making a lot of noise as if they were restless. It seemed as though they were not happy in their cages.

**2. Describe the stranger who came to the pet shop. What did he want?**

**Ans:** The stranger was a peculiar man who was wearing shiny shoes and cheap, ill-fitted but a new suit. He had a shuttling glance and close-cropped hair. He wanted something small in a cage with wings.

**3. (i) The man insisted on buying the doves because he was fond of birds. Do you agree?**

**(ii) How had he earned the five dollars he had?**

**Ans: (i)** No, the man did not insist on buying the doves just because he was fond of birds. He did not ask for the birds directly, instead he said that he wanted a creature with wings in a cage. This tells us that he had sympathy for the birds and wanted to see them flying.

**(ii)** He had earned those five dollars by doing hard labour in jail in his ten years of imprisonment and deliberately spent that hard-earned money to set free living creatures from being imprisoned.

**4. Was the customer interested in the care and feeding of the doves he had bought? If not, why not?**

**Ans:** The stranger was not interested in the care and feeding of the doves because he wanted to set them free.

## Exercises

**Discuss the following topics in groups.**

**1. Why, in your opinion, did the man set the doves free?**

**Ans:** In my opinion, I think that the man must have set the doves free because he himself had been in jail for ten years. He had sympathy for the birds and knew the pain of being imprisoned against their wishes. He wanted to see them flying and enjoy their freedom that is why he bought something with the wings. He wanted to smell the happiness of freedom from cages by setting the doves free.

**2. Why did it make Mr Purcell feel “vaguely insulted”?**

**Ans:** Mr Purcell felt “vaguely insulted” as the man bought the doves from Purcell’s shop for five dollars and then went outside to set them free. It was Mr. Purcell who had kept these birds in cage and restricted their freedom and the man spent his ten years income only to give the doves freedom, so he felt all themore insulted.