

D Reading

6 Read the short story below.

Passage B: A tale of a bear

There was once a lady who lived in an old manor house on the border of a big forest, high up in the North. This lady had a pet bear she was very fond of. It had been found in the forest half-dead of hunger, so small and helpless that it had to be brought up on the bottle by the lady and her old cook. This was several years ago and now it had grown up to be a big bear so strong that he could have slain a cow and carried it away if he had wanted to.

But he did not want to; he was a most amiable bear who did not dream of harming anybody, man or beast. He used to sit outside his kennel and look with his small, intelligent eyes most amicably at the cattle grazing in the field nearby. The children used to ride on his back and had more than once been found asleep in his kennel between his two paws. The three Lapland dogs loved to play all sorts of games with him, pull his ears and his stump of a tail and tease him in every way, but he did not mind in the least.

He had a fine appetite, but his friend the cook saw to it that he got his fill. Bears are vegetarians if they have a chance; fruit is what they like best. Bears look clumsy and slow in their movements, but try a bear with an apple tree and you will soon find out that he can easily beat any schoolchild at that activity.

There had been some difficulties about the bee-hives; he had been punished for this by being put on the chain for two days with a bleeding nose and he had never done it again. Otherwise he was only put on the chain at night (for a bear is apt to get somewhat ill-tempered if kept on a chain) or on Sundays when his mistress went to spend the afternoon with her married sister, who lived in a solitary house on the other side of the mountain lake, a good hour's walk through the dense forest. It was not considered good for him to wander about in the forest with all its temptations. Now he knew quite well what it meant when his mistress put him on the chain on Sundays, with a friendly tap on his head and the promise of an apple on her return if he had been good during her absence. He was sorry but resigned.

One Sunday when the lady had chained him up as usual and was about half-way through the forest, she suddenly thought she heard the cracking of a tree branch on the winding footpath behind her. She looked back and was horrified to see the bear coming along full-speed. In a minute he had joined her, panting and sniffing, to take up his usual place, dog-fashion, at her heels. The lady was very angry: she was already late for lunch, there was no time to take him back home, she did not want him to come with her, and besides, it was very naughty of him to have disobeyed her and broken away from his chain. She ordered him in her severest voice to go back at once, menacing him with her umbrella. He stopped a moment and looked at her with his cunning eyes, but then kept on sniffing at her. When the lady saw that he had even lost his new collar, she got still more angry and hit him on the nose with her umbrella so hard that it broke in two. He stopped again, shook his head, and opened his big mouth several times as if he wanted to say something. Then he turned round and began to shuffle back the way he had come, stopping now and then to look at the lady till at last she lost sight of him.

When the lady came home in the evening, he was sitting in his usual place outside his kennel looking very sorry for himself. The lady was still very angry with him and she told him that he would have no apple and no supper, and that he would be chained for two days as an extra punishment.

The old cook, who loved the bear as if he had been her son, rushed out from the kitchen. 'What are you scolding him for, missus?' she asked. 'He has been as good as gold the whole day, bless him! He has been sitting here looking the whole time towards the gate for you to come back.'

It had been a different bear!

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E Language and style

7 Write sentences about the bear in Passage B using ideas expressed in the following grammatical structures.

a Not only ... but also

b Never before ...

c Neither ... nor

d No longer ...

e Not so much as a ...

8 a Explain how the writer achieves the effect of surprise in Passage **B**.

b Explain how the writer evokes sympathy for the bear in Passage **B**.

F Comprehension and summary



- 9 a Summarise the story of Passage **B** in one paragraph.

- b Give the reasons, in sentences, why humans find bears attractive, using ideas stated in or inferred from Passages **A** and **B**.
