



Notes

**22****READING WITH UNDERSTANDING****OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

- understand short theme based passages and
- answer questions on those passages.

**22.1 SECTION I**

*T*he Banyan Tree, which is very well known, is a variety of fig tree. The name, Banyan, used in English, needs some explanation. The name seems to have been given originally by Europeans in the Persian Gulf to the tree under which Hindu members of the merchant class (Baniyas) used to assemble for worship or business, and gradually the name spread to other parts of India and Asia. For centuries, poets and writers in India, have sung and written about the Banyan Tree.

The Banyan tree seems to be common to the sub-Himalayan forests and the slopes of the hill ranges in Peninsular India. At present it is commonly seen, planted along many of the roads of India, near temples and shrines, and on open grounds near villages. Often the tree is the rallying point for the village, a kind of club-house where much of the social life and business of the community is carried out, and much of the gossip exchanged. Its cool shade affords welcome relief from the burning sun in the hotter parts of the country.

It is an enormous tree, 70 to 100 feet high, sending down roots from the branches, which enter the ground and form trunks, thus extending the growth of the tree indefinitely. These roots that come out of the branches are at first as slender as cotton threads, but once they become attached to the ground, they grow into

mighty pillars that support the weight of the heaviest branches. The leaves are oval in shape, and smooth and shining.

The Banyan Tree is frequently planted along streets and roads. But it is in open places in the villages that it reaches its full glory. As the tree grows in size, the number of roots from the branches increase, and the spread of the tree becomes greater until a whole battalion can shelter under the shade of some of the older trees. There are some famous Banyan Trees in India – in the Royal Botanic Garden Sibpur Calcutta, for example, which is 3.6 metres around the trunk and the crown of roof of which covers 416 m.

An even larger one in Satara Maharashtra, is 483 m. in circumference.



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**INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.1**

1. Complete the sentences below with the phrases given in the box below-

- meeting place for the people in the village.
- the Banyan tree
- sends down roots from its branches
- sit under it and transact business
- reaches its full size
- Shibpur, Calcutta
- oval and shining

- a) A well-known variety of the fig tree is called .....
- b) The tree is a .....
- c) It was called ‘Banyan’ because Hindu merchants or Baniyas used to .....
- d) It is a big tree, and spreads over a great area, because it .....
- e) When it grows in open places in the village it .....
- f) The leaves are .....
- g) There is a big Banyan tree in .....



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2. Put T against the statements that are correct and F against the ones that are incorrect.
- The banyan tree grows near the sea.
  - Villagers enjoy sitting in the shade of the tree.
  - The tree was called 'The Banyan Tree' by the Americans.
  - It is a small tree.
  - It grows well in towns.
  - Usually there are temples and shrines near it.
3. Words and phrases from the passage are given below. Select words from the box that mean the same, and write them down side by side.
- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| variety        | ordinary          |
| common         | provide           |
| shrine         | talk              |
| rallying point | readily           |
| gossip         | places of worship |
| afford         | bag               |
| enormous       | meeting place     |
| slender        | thin              |
| pouch          | big               |
|                | different         |
4. Give the passage a title.

## 22.2 SECTION II

All vertebrate or back-boned animal life in the world is divided into two classes, the warm-blooded animals and the cold-blooded. The former group includes those whose blood keeps a constant temperature and is little affected by the temperature of the surrounding air. The latter group includes fishes, frogs and reptiles whose blood temperature changes with the temperature of the surrounding atmosphere. The warm-blooded animals are further subdivided into Mammals (including human beings) which are covered with hair, bear live young and suckle them, and Birds, which are covered with feathers, lay eggs and as a rule make them hatch with the heat of their bodies.

Birds are the only feathered creatures in the world. At first sight it might seem that all birds are the same. They all fly about, build nests and lay eggs. A closer look will show that in fact birds life includes many forms which are very different from one another and which sometimes seem to bear very little relationship to one another after all. It includes the tiny humming bird which is not bigger than a man's thumb, and the ostrich which stands as high as a pony. It includes birds which can fly thousands of miles, and others like the penguins which cannot raise themselves off the ground. It includes birds which weave elaborate nests like the weaver birds, and other which lay their eggs straight on the ground without any preparation. It includes birds which require highly specialized foods, like vultures which will only eat dead animals, and still others like crows, which eat practically anything except metal. It includes birds like the domestic hen whose chicks start running about and scratching for themselves as soon as they are hatched, and others like parakeets and eagles whose chicks cannot leave their nests for several weeks. And finally, it includes birds which seem to be unable to live away from the company of man, and others which retreat and become extinct as soon as human beings come near the areas in which they live.



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### INTEXT QUESTIONS 22.2

- I. 'Vertebrate' animals are those that
  - (a) have warm blood.
  - (b) have a back bone.
  - (c) walk on two legs.
2. Fishes, frogs and reptiles are those creatures
  - (a) which have no blood
  - (b) the temperature of whose blood changes with that of the outside atmosphere.
  - (c) the temperature of whose blood remains the same at all times.
3. Mammals have \_\_\_\_\_
  - (a) feathers.
  - (b) hair on their bodies.
  - (c) scales.
4. Birds can \_\_\_\_\_
  - (a) bear live young.



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- (b) adopt the young of other species.  
 (c) lay eggs and hatch them.
5. All birds \_\_\_\_\_
- (a) lay eggs.  
 (b) fly.  
 (c) build nests.
2. Write T against the statements that are correct and F against the ones that are incorrect.
- (a) All birds are small.  
 (b) The ostrich is a very tall bird.  
 (c) Vultures eat everything.  
 (d) All birds build nests.  
 (e) Some birds build very complicated nests.  
 (f) All birds can fly.  
 (g) All birds like to live with human beings.  
 (h) Birds are warm blooded.
3. The antonyms (words with opposite meaning) of the following words are given in the box below. Write them together

vertebrate	cold
warm	invertebrate
former	unaffected
affected	latter
live	low
high	wild
elaborate	dead
domestic	simple
unable	advance
retreat	able



## CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

### Intext Questions 22.1

1. The Banyan tree, meeting place for people, sit under it and transact business, sends down roots, reaches its full size, oval and shining, Shibpur, Calcutta.
2. F, T, F, F, F, F
3. Variety - different, common-ordinary, shrine -place of worship, rallying point - meeting place, gossip - talk, afford- provide  
enormous -big, slender-thin, pouch-bag

### Intext Questions 22.2

- 1-b 2-b, 3-b, 4-c, 5-a
2. a-F, b-T, c-F, d-F, e-T, f-F, g-F, h-T
3. vertebrate - Invertebrate  
warm - cold  
former - latter  
affected - unaffected  
live - dead  
high - low  
elaborate - simple  
domestic - wild  
unable - able  
retreat - advance



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