

In the Kingdom of Fools

Class 9 · English Moments · Chapter 4

Complete Study Notes & Practice Questions

Subject	English (Moments – NCERT)
Chapter	4 – In the Kingdom of Fools
Author	A. K. Ramanujan (retold)
Type	Kannada Folk Tale

Section A — Multiple Choice Questions (20 Questions)

Choose the correct option for each question. Each question carries 1 mark.

1. What is the story 'In the Kingdom of Fools' based on?

- (a) A Bengali legend
- (b) A Kannada folk tale
- (c) A Tamil poem
- (d) A Sanskrit drama

Answer: (b) A Kannada folk tale

2. Who retold the story 'In the Kingdom of Fools'?

- (a) R. K. Narayan
- (b) Ruskin Bond
- (c) A. K. Ramanujan
- (d) Mulk Raj Anand

Answer: (c) A. K. Ramanujan

3. When did the people of the kingdom work?

- (a) During the day
- (b) In the morning
- (c) At night
- (d) In the evening

Answer: (c) At night

4. How much did everything cost in the Kingdom of Fools?

- (a) Two duddus
- (b) Five duddus
- (c) Ten duddus
- (d) One duddu

Answer: (d) One duddu

5. Why did the disciple choose to stay in the kingdom?

- (a) He liked the king
- (b) Food was very cheap
- (c) He wanted to become a minister
- (d) He had nowhere else to go

Answer: (b) Food was very cheap

6. What happened to the disciple because of eating so much?

- (a) He fell ill
- (b) He became very thin
- (c) He became very fat
- (d) He became the king

Answer: (c) He became very fat

7. What was the punishment for sleeping during the day in the kingdom?

- (a) A fine
- (b) Imprisonment
- (c) Death penalty
- (d) Exile

Answer: (c) Death penalty

8. Who first complained to the king about the thief's death?

- (a) The merchant
- (b) The bricklayer
- (c) The thief's brother
- (d) The goldsmith

Answer: (c) The thief's brother

9. Why was the merchant blamed at first?

- (a) He stole from the thief
- (b) His wall fell on the thief
- (c) He reported the thief
- (d) He built the house

Answer: (b) His wall fell on the thief

10. Why was the bricklayer blamed?

- (a) He attacked the thief
- (b) He built a weak wall
- (c) He distracted the dancing girl
- (d) He delayed the merchant

Answer: (b) He built a weak wall

11. Why was the dancing girl blamed?

- (a) She stole the bricks
- (b) She distracted the bricklayer
- (c) She complained to the king
- (d) She knew the thief

Answer: (b) She distracted the bricklayer

12. Why was the goldsmith blamed?

- (a) He sold bad gold
- (b) He kept calling the dancing girl to his shop
- (c) He built the wall
- (d) He killed the thief

Answer: (b) He kept calling the dancing girl to his shop

13. Why could the rich merchant not be punished?

- (a) He had escaped
- (b) He was too rich
- (c) He was already dead
- (d) The king forgave him

Answer: (c) He was already dead

14. Why was the disciple chosen for execution?

- (a) He was guilty of a crime
- (b) He was fat enough to fit the execution stake
- (c) He had insulted the king
- (d) The guru asked for it

Answer: (b) He was fat enough to fit the execution stake

15. What clever story did the guru tell the king?

- (a) The stake was cursed
- (b) The first to die on the stake would be reborn as king
- (c) The stake would bring bad luck
- (d) The disciple was a prince

Answer: (b) The first to die on the stake would be reborn as king

16. Why did the king want to die first on the stake?

- (a) He was tired of ruling
- (b) He wanted to remain king in the next life
- (c) He wanted to save the disciple
- (d) The guru forced him

Answer: (b) He wanted to remain king in the next life

17. What happened to the king and the minister in the end?

- (a) They ran away from the kingdom
- (b) They were both executed on the stake
- (c) They became wiser
- (d) They imprisoned the guru

Answer: (b) They were both executed on the stake

18. Who did the people ask to become their new rulers?

- (a) The thief's brother and the goldsmith
- (b) The merchant's son and the bricklayer
- (c) The guru and his disciple
- (d) The dancing girl and the minister

Answer: (c) The guru and his disciple

19. What condition did the guru place before accepting the kingship?

- (a) He would rule for only one year
- (b) All the old foolish laws would be changed

- (c) The disciple would become minister
- (d) He would not pay taxes

Answer: (b) All the old foolish laws would be changed

20. What is the main lesson of this story?

- (a) Wealth always wins
- (b) Foolishness destroys and wisdom saves
- (c) Kings are always wrong
- (d) Folk tales are only for children

Answer: (b) Foolishness destroys and wisdom saves

Section B — Fill in the Blanks (10 Questions)

Fill each blank with the correct word. Answers are given below each question.

1. The story 'In the Kingdom of Fools' is a _____ folk tale.

Answer: Kannada

2. In the strange kingdom, people slept during the _____ and worked at _____.

Answer: day / night

3. Everything in the kingdom cost just one _____.

Answer: duddu

4. The guru warned his disciple that staying among _____ is dangerous.

Answer: fools

5. The disciple stayed in the kingdom because he was tempted by _____ food.

Answer: cheap

6. The thief died when a _____ fell on him.

Answer: wall

7. The disciple was chosen for execution because he was _____ enough to fit the stake.

Answer: fat

8. The guru told the king that whoever died first on the stake would be reborn as _____.

Answer: king

9. The king and his minister went to the prison secretly at _____ to take the place of the guru and disciple.

Answer: night

10. After becoming rulers, the guru changed all the old _____ laws.

Answer: foolish

Section C — Short Answer Questions (10 Questions)

Answer each question in two to four sentences. Each question carries 2 marks.

1. What were the two strange rules in the Kingdom of Fools?

In the Kingdom of Fools, people worked at night and slept during the day. Also, everything cost exactly one duddu, regardless of what it was.

2. Why did the guru decide to leave the kingdom?

The guru was a wise man. He knew that living among foolish people was dangerous, because fools make unpredictable decisions that can harm others.

3. Why did the disciple stay behind when the guru left?

The disciple was tempted by the very cheap food available in the kingdom. He could eat as much as he liked for just one duddu, so he chose to stay.

4. How did the thief die?

A thief broke into a rich merchant's house. An old, weak wall of the house collapsed and fell on him, killing him instantly.

5. Describe the chain of blame that led to the disciple's arrest.

The merchant was blamed because his wall fell; then the bricklayer was blamed for making a weak wall; the dancing girl was blamed for distracting him; the goldsmith was blamed for calling her repeatedly; and finally the rich merchant was blamed for making the goldsmith hurry. Since the merchant was dead, his son was held responsible — and eventually the blame landed on the fat disciple, who was chosen merely to fit the execution stake.

6. Why was the disciple unable to save himself?

The disciple was completely innocent but the foolish king insisted that someone had to be executed. Because the disciple was fat enough to fit the execution stake, he was chosen, and no amount of protest could save him on his own.

7. How did the guru come to know that his disciple was in danger?

The guru was very wise and gifted. Through a vision, he sensed that his disciple was in great trouble, so he rushed back to the kingdom to rescue him.

8. What clever trick did the guru use to save his disciple?

The guru told the king that the execution stake was special — whoever died first on it would be reborn as king, and the second as minister. The foolish king believed this and wanted to die first so he could remain king in his next life.

9. What did the people of the kingdom do after the king and minister died?

The people were shocked and confused after losing both their king and minister. They searched for the guru and his disciple and requested them to become the new king and minister of the kingdom.

10. What changes did the guru make after becoming king?

The guru agreed to become king only on the condition that all the old foolish laws would be changed. He then restored normal life — people worked during the day and slept at night, and things were priced fairly and differently.

Section D — Frequently Asked Questions (10 FAQs)

These are the most commonly asked questions in exams. Read them carefully.

Q1. What type of story is 'In the Kingdom of Fools', and who wrote it?

'In the Kingdom of Fools' is a Kannada folk tale retold by A. K. Ramanujan. It appears in his collection called 'Folk Tales from India' and is part of the Class 9 NCERT Moments textbook.

Q2. What is the central idea of the story?

The story shows the contrast between wisdom and foolishness. It teaches us that foolish decisions and unjust laws can destroy a kingdom, while intelligence and common sense can save lives.

Q3. Who is the wisest character in the story and why?

The guru is the wisest character. He immediately recognised the danger of the foolish kingdom and warned his disciple. Later, without any weapons or power, he used only his wit to save his disciple's life and outwit the king.

Q4. What mistake did the disciple make, and what did he learn from it?

The disciple ignored his guru's wise advice and stayed in the kingdom out of greed for cheap food. His greed made him fat, which is why he was chosen for execution. He learnt that greed can lead to serious trouble and that we must always listen to wise counsel.

Q5. How does the story show that foolish kings can create injustice?

The king's court is a perfect example of foolish justice. Instead of fairly investigating the thief's death, the king allowed blame to be passed from one person to another in a ridiculous chain. Eventually, an innocent fat man — the disciple — was chosen for execution simply because he fit the stake. This shows how foolish rulers can cause great injustice.

Q6. Why is the guru's trick considered an act of wisdom rather than dishonesty?

The guru's trick was necessary to save an innocent life from a deeply unjust system. He used his intelligence to turn the king's greed against him, without harming anyone himself. In such a situation, using cleverness to prevent injustice is considered wise rather than dishonest.

Q7. What does the story tell us about greed?

The story shows greed in two characters. The disciple's greed for cheap food puts him in a life-threatening situation. The king's greed to be king again in his next life causes him to rush to his own death. Both suffer because of their greed, making it one of the key lessons of the story.

Q8. Could the story have ended differently? What if the guru had not come?

If the guru had not returned, the innocent disciple would have been executed. The story suggests that without wisdom to counter foolishness, innocent people suffer. The guru's timely arrival shows the importance of having wise people around us.

Q9. What does the story say about laws and governance?

The story strongly suggests that laws must be based on reason and common sense. The foolish king's laws — working at night, uniform pricing, and bizarre justice — caused suffering. When the guru took over, he immediately changed these laws to reflect fairness and logic, showing that good governance is built on wisdom.

Q10. Why is the ending of the story satisfying?

The ending is satisfying because justice is finally served. The foolish king and minister bring about their own downfall through their greed and stupidity. The innocent guru and disciple are freed and even become rulers. The kingdom is restored to normality. It gives us the comforting message that

wisdom eventually triumphs over foolishness.

Section E — NCERT Book Exercise (Think About It)

These are the official NCERT questions with detailed model answers.

Q1. What are the two strange things the guru and his disciple find in the Kingdom of Fools?

The guru and disciple noticed two very strange things. First, the entire kingdom worked at night and slept through the day — completely opposite to normal life. Second, everything in the kingdom was sold for exactly one duddu, whether it was rice, bananas, or anything else. Both customs went completely against common sense.

Q2. Why does the disciple decide to stay in the Kingdom of Fools? Is it a good idea?

The disciple decided to stay because food was wonderfully cheap. He could eat as much rice, bananas, and ghee as he liked for just one duddu. No, it was definitely not a good idea. The guru had clearly warned him that the people were fools and that staying there was dangerous. The disciple's greed for cheap food blinded him to this risk, and he eventually found himself facing execution for no real fault of his own.

Q3. Name all the people who were tried in the king's court, and give the reasons for their trial.

Several people were tried in the king's foolish court:

- The merchant — his wall fell on the thief and killed him.
- The bricklayer — he had built a weak wall that collapsed.
- The dancing girl — her noise and anklets distracted the bricklayer.
- The goldsmith — he kept calling the dancing girl to his shop repeatedly.
- The rich merchant — he had once pressured the goldsmith to rush his work, causing the goldsmith to call the dancing girl in the first place. Since the rich merchant was dead, the blame fell on his son. Eventually, an innocent disciple was chosen simply because he was fat enough to fit the stake.

Q4. Who is the real culprit according to the king? Why does he escape punishment?

According to the king's reasoning, the rich merchant was ultimately the real culprit because he started the whole chain of events by pressuring the goldsmith years ago. However, the merchant had already died and could not be brought to justice. Since the king still wanted someone punished, he decided to execute the merchant's son in his father's place — an equally foolish and unjust decision.

Q5. What are the guru's words of wisdom? When does the disciple remember them?

The guru had warned his disciple: 'This is no place for us to stay. These are fools and you never know what they will do next.' The disciple only remembered these wise words when he had already been condemned to death and was being prepared for execution on the stake. He then prayed sincerely to his guru, wishing he had listened earlier.

Q6. How does the guru manage to save his disciple's life?

The guru used a brilliant trick. He told the king privately that the execution stake was a very special one — whoever died first upon it would be reborn as the king of the land in their next life, and the second person would be reborn as the minister. The greedy and foolish king immediately believed this. Desperate to secure his position in the next life, the king and his minister secretly went to the prison at night, took the places of the guru and disciple, and were executed. The guru and disciple were thus saved without any violence.

■ Quick Revision — Key Points to Remember

- The story is a Kannada folk tale retold by A. K. Ramanujan.
- The kingdom had two bizarre rules: work at night; everything costs one duddu.
- The guru warned against staying; the disciple ignored him out of greed.
- The thief died when a wall fell on him — leading to a ridiculous chain of blame.
- The disciple was chosen for execution simply because he was fat.
- The guru tricked the king with the 'reborn as king' story about the stake.
- The king and minister executed themselves — victims of their own greed and foolishness.
- The guru became king only after insisting all old foolish laws be changed.
- Moral: Wisdom always triumphs over foolishness. Greed leads to self-destruction.