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Question Bank

WBBSE Class 7 English (Blossoms VII)

Lesson 13: Ghosts on the Verandah

by Ruskin Bond

Seen Questions, Grammar Exercises and Writing Practice

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88 questions: 78 textbook questions, 0 school paper questions, 10 additional practice questions

Lesson Summary

"Ghosts on the Verandah" is a funny story about a night spent at a friend's house, where ghost stories told in the evening make everyone afraid of their own shadows. The author, a boy, goes to stay at his friend Anil's house while Anil's father is out of town. In the evening Anil's mother, whose memory is stored with stories of spirits and incredible folklore, tells the boys ghost stories on the verandah.

She tells them about the Jinn, a spirit who is attracted by long hair and pretty black eyes, like those of Mulia. She tells them about the Munjia, a spirit who lives in a peepul tree. When a Munjia is annoyed, he rushes out from his tree and upsets tongas, bullock-carts, cycles and even a bus. One must be careful while yawning under a peepul tree at night, because the Munjia will jump down one's throat and completely ruin one's digestion. She also tells them about a boy in the class who was a Jinn: he merely stretched out his hand, took a book from the cupboard and handed it to the teacher, his arm stretching about four yards, without moving from his seat. Anil wishes he were a Jinn, so that he could take advantage in games, especially in volleyball matches.

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The stories frighten the boys so much that Kamal and the author do not want to go to their room. Kamal sings softly to raise their spirits, but the singing only makes the atmosphere more eerie for the author. Anil's mother thinks that seeing a snake is good luck. Later in the night, when Anil's mother sees the boys rushing about, she cries out and says that their bed has also gone. Anil and Mulia appear pale and anxious because they have succeeded in frightening themselves with the ghost stories. When Anil's mother looks into the room and finds it empty, she thinks that the boys have also disappeared along with the beds. In the end the mystery is explained in the funniest way: what she took for ghosts were only the boys' pajamas, and she herself takes fright, gives a scream and collapses on a cot. The story shows how ghost stories can frighten even those who tell them.

Key Points

Author	Ruskin Bond (born 1934), Indian writer of stories for children
Theme	Ghost stories and fear; humour in being frightened by one's own imagination; how fear spreads from one person to another

Characters	The author (the narrator, a schoolboy); Anil, his friend; Kamal, another boy; Mulia; Anil's mother, who tells the ghost stories
Setting	Anil's house, the verandah and the boys' room, one night while Anil's father is out of town
Grammar topics taught	Adverbs and their placing; modals; correct tense and sequence of tenses; subject-verb agreement; degrees of adjectives
Writing topics taught	Story writing; paragraph writing on a magic show

> **Note:** No genuine school-paper Seen material was found for this lesson in the research pass. Section B is therefore empty, and Section C adds ten fresh practice questions on the lesson.

Seen Questions

A. From the Textbook (Blossoms VII)

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Act 1: Complete the table, Statement - Reason [textbook exercise]

(a) The author went to stay at Anil's house. Give the reason.

Answer: Anil's father was out of town.

> **Note:** Published sources differ here. One source says the author had been invited to stay at Anil's house. The reason used above, that Anil's father was out of town, is the one given by two sources, but the wording needs a check against the printed book.

(b) Anil's mother told them ghost stories. Give the reason.

Answer: Anil's mother's memory was stored with stories of spirits and incredible folklore.

(c) The boy in the classroom could stretch his hands four yards. Give the reason.

Answer: He was a Jinn.

(d) Anil wished to be a Jinn. Give the reason.

Answer: To get advantage in games, especially for volleyball matches. With a Jinn's long reach he could take advantage in volleyball.

Act 2: Answer the following questions [textbook exercise]

(a) What attracts a Jinn?

Answer: Long hair and pretty black eyes, like Mulia's, attract a Jinn.

(b) List the activities of an annoyed Munjia.

Answer: When a Munjia is annoyed, he rushes out from his tree and upsets tongas, bullock-carts, cycles and even a bus.

(c) Why must one be careful while yawning under a peepul tree at night?

Answer: One must be careful while yawning under a peepul tree at night because the Munjia will jump down one's throat and completely ruin one's digestion.

(d) How did the boy in the class show that he was a Jinn?

Answer: The boy merely stretched out his hand, took the book from the cupboard and handed it to the teacher, his arm stretching about four yards, without moving from his seat.

Act 3: Fill in the blanks with incredible, fetch, cupboard, agility [textbook exercise]

You may need to change the form of the words.

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(a) Since she is a gymnast, she has great _____.

Answer: Since she is a gymnast, she has great agility.

(b) Tuhin _____ a bucket of water.

Answer: Tuhin fetched a bucket of water.

(c) Your story is _____.

Answer: Your story is incredible.

(d) The utensils are kept inside a _____.

Answer: The utensils are kept inside a cupboard.

Act 4: Complete the following comparisons [textbook exercise]

Choose from the box: cold, hot, black, proud, brave, green, heavy, gentle, firm, busy.

(a) as _____ as coal

Answer: As black as coal.

(b) as _____ as a lion

Answer: As brave as a lion.

(c) as _____ as a bee

Answer: As busy as a bee.

(d) as _____ as a lamb

Answer: As gentle as a lamb.

(e) as _____ as a peacock

Answer: As proud as a peacock.

(f) as _____ as grass

Answer: As green as grass.

(g) as _____ as a rock

Answer: As firm as a rock.

(h) as _____ as lead

Answer: As heavy as lead.

(i) as _____ as ice

Answer: As cold as ice.

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(j) as _____ as fire

Answer: As hot as fire.

Act 5: Rewrite the sentences using the adverbs in brackets in the appropriate place [textbook exercise]

(a) This exercise is easy. (too)

Answer: This exercise is too easy.

(b) The train is fast. (fairly)

Answer: The train is fairly fast.

(c) The bottle is full. (quite)

Answer: The bottle is quite full.

(d) We won the match. (nearly)

Answer: We nearly won the match.

(e) We are late, let us hurry. (rather)

Answer: We are rather late, let us hurry.

(f) She has come in. (just)

Answer: She has just come in.

(g) He makes a mistake. (never)

Answer: He never makes a mistake.

(h) I get up early in the morning. (always)

Answer: I always get up early in the morning.

(i) I am sorry. (very)

Answer: I am very sorry.

(j) He was intelligent to solve the problem. (enough)

Answer: He was intelligent enough to solve the problem.

Act 6: Complete the sentences with information from the text [textbook exercise]

(a) Anil's mother thought that seeing a snake _____.

Answer: Anil's mother thought that seeing a snake was good luck.

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(b) Kamal and the author did not want to go to their room because _____.

Answer: Kamal and the author did not want to go to their room because they were frightened by Anil's mother's ghost stories. They were afraid of ghosts.

(c) When Anil's mother saw the boys rushing about, she _____.

Answer: When Anil's mother saw the boys rushing about, she cried and said that their bed had also gone.

> **Note:** Published sources differ here. One says she screamed and collapsed on a cot. That scream and collapse belongs to the later scene, when she takes the boys' pajamas for ghosts, not to this sentence. The answer above follows the reading that matches this sentence.

(d) Kamal sang softly because _____.

Answer: Kamal sang softly because he wanted to raise their spirits and make the atmosphere less eerie.

Act 7: Answer the following questions [textbook exercise]

(a) Why did Anil and Mulia appear "pale and anxious"?

Answer: Anil and Mulia appeared pale and anxious because they had succeeded in frightening themselves as a result of Anil's mother's ghost stories.

> **Note:** One published answer says they looked pale and anxious because they had noticed that the beds and the boys were missing from the room. That describes Anil's mother's reaction in question (b), not the reason Anil and Mulia looked pale and anxious.

(b) What did Anil's mother think when she saw the room empty?

Answer: She thought that the boys, Rusty and Kamal, had also disappeared along with the beds. She said that their bed had also gone.

(c) What was the effect of Kamal's singing on the author?

Answer: Kamal's singing made the atmosphere more eerie for the author, instead of calming him.

> **Note:** Published sources differ here. One says the singing had no significant calming effect and its effect was not explicitly mentioned in the text. The answer above follows the reading that the singing made the night feel more eerie for the author. Check against the printed book.

(d) Do you think Anil's mother believed in ghosts? Give a reason for your answer.

Answer: Yes, Anil's mother believed in ghosts. Her memory was stored with stories of spirits and incredible folklore, she gave the boys cautionary advice about spirits like the Munjia, and in the end she herself took the boys' pajamas for ghosts, gave a scream and collapsed on a cot.

Act 8: Fill in the blanks with suitable modals [textbook exercise]

(a) I _____ speak English.

Answer: I can speak English.

(b) We eat so that we _____ live.

Answer: We eat so that we can live.

(c) You _____ go now.

Answer: You may go now.

> **Note:** Published sources differ on this item: one gives "should", another gives "may". "May" is used here because it gives permission to go. Check against the printed book.

(d) _____ you have good luck.

Answer: May you have good luck.

(e) We _____ be rewarded.

Answer: We will be rewarded.

> **Note:** Published sources differ on this item: one gives "should", another gives "will". "Will" is used here. Check against the printed book.

(f) I _____ not surrender.

Answer: I will not surrender.

(g) You _____ be able to do it in no time.

Answer: You must be able to do it in no time.

> **Note:** Published sources differ on this item: one gives "will", another gives "must". "Must" is used here. Check against the printed book.

(h) We _____ help the poor.

Answer: We should help the poor.

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(i) I _____ never tell lies.

Answer: Not published. No published source gives a modal for this item, so no answer is invented here. The question is printed as it stands, and the answer must be checked against the printed book.

> **Note:** This item is recorded as NOT PUBLISHED. Neither of the published sources checked gives a modal for "I _____ never tell lies". Do not guess the answer; check the printed book.

(j) Tomorrow we _____ have a holiday.

Answer: Tomorrow we will have a holiday.

Act 9: Fill in the blanks with the correct tense of the verb [textbook exercise]

(a) She ran so fast that I _____ (can) not overtake her.

Answer: She ran so fast that I could not overtake her.

(b) I thought I _____ (see) you yesterday.

Answer: I thought I saw you yesterday.

(c) He helps his neighbours more than he _____ (help) his family.

Answer: He helps his neighbours more than he helps his family.

(d) When I saw her, I _____ (speak) to her.

Answer: When I saw her, I spoke to her.

(e) The more he learned, the more he _____ (want) to learn.

Answer: The more he learned, the more he wanted to learn.

(f) There was a rumour that he _____ (die) in the accident.

Answer: There was a rumour that he died in the accident.

(g) We thought that she _____ (will) succeed.

Answer: We thought that she would succeed.

(h) I shall nurse her so that she _____ (may) recover.

Answer: I shall nurse her so that she may recover.

(i) I left the place as soon as I _____ (hear) the news.

Answer: I left the place as soon as I heard the news.

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(j) Honesty _____ (be) the best policy.

Answer: Honesty is the best policy.

Act 10: Fill in the blanks by choosing the correct verb [textbook exercise]

(a) All that glitters _____ (is/are) not gold.

Answer: All that glitters is not gold.

(b) The great poet and novelist _____ (is/are) dead.

Answer: The great poet and novelist is dead.

(c) Each of the boys _____ (was/were) given a prize.

Answer: Each of the boys was given a prize.

(d) Salim as well as his friend _____ (is/are) honest.

Answer: Salim as well as his friend is honest.

(e) Time and tide _____ (wait/waits) for none.

Answer: Time and tide wait for none.

(f) Neither of the girls _____ (has/have) brought her book.

Answer: Neither of the girls has brought her book.

(g) None but the brave _____ (deserve/deserves) the fair.

Answer: None but the brave deserves the fair.

(h) Three-fourths of the meal _____ (was/were) eaten.

Answer: Three-fourths of the meal was eaten.

(i) Either you or he _____ (has/have) done it.

Answer: Either you or he has done it.

(j) Slow and steady _____ (win/wins) the race.

Answer: Slow and steady wins the race.

Act 11: Fill in the gaps with appropriate forms of adjectives [textbook exercise]

Positive - Comparative - Superlative.

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Complete the table: good _____ _____; _____ darker _____; wise _____ _____; _____ harder _____; soft _____ _____; high _____ _____; _____ bright _____; _____ _____ least; _____ more intelligent _____; serious _____ _____; _____ lesser _____; _____ _____ swiftest.

Answer:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
good	better	best
dark	darker	darkest
wise	wiser	wisest
hard	harder	hardest
soft	softer	softest
high	higher	highest
bright	brighter	brightest
little	less	least
intelligent	more intelligent	most intelligent
serious	more serious	most serious
little	lesser	least
swift	swifter	swiftest

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> **Note:** The book's row gives "lesser" as the comparative. "Lesser" is the comparative of "little" in the sense of "smaller". One published source gives "small - smaller - smallest" for this row instead; the book's own form, "lesser", is used above.

Act 12: Pick out the adjectives and write their degree [textbook exercise]

(a) Which is the best book?

Answer: best - superlative degree.

(b) December is colder than other months.

Answer: colder - comparative degree.

(c) He is my eldest brother.

Answer: eldest - superlative degree.

(d) Nothing moves as fast as light.

Answer: fast - positive degree.

(e) Success is sweeter than failure.

Answer: sweeter - comparative degree.

Act 13: Write a story in which you and your two friends are forced to spend a night in an old, desolate building far away from home [textbook exercise]

Write a story in which you and your two friends are forced to spend a night in an old, desolate building far away from home.

Answer (sample story): Lost amidst the landscapes of West Bengal, my companions, Rohan and Priya, and I found ourselves stranded near an ancient, desolate building known as "Sundar Villa". The dilapidated structure stood as a relic of a forgotten era. Nightfall descended, casting eerie shadows on the decaying walls. Fear gripped us, yet we huddled together, drawing strength from one another. As the night wore on, the wind whispered haunting tales of bygone days. But with the first light of dawn, we emerged, triumphant over our fears. The experience deepened our bond, forever etching the memory of "Sundar Villa" and our unwavering friendship in our hearts.

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Act 14: Write a paragraph on a magic show [textbook exercise]

Use the following points: Place - the atmosphere - dress of the magician - tricks that he performed - how you liked the show - did you feel interested in performing magic by yourself - conclusion.

Write a paragraph on a magic show using the points given above.

Answer (sample paragraph): I attended a magic show in Kolkata, held in a cozy theatre. The atmosphere was filled with anticipation and wonder. The magician wore a flashy costume with a colourful cape. He performed mind-boggling tricks, such as making cards disappear and reappear and sawing a person in half. I thoroughly enjoyed the show and was amazed by the magician's skills. It sparked my interest in learning magic myself. In conclusion, the magic show in Kolkata was a delightful experience that left me in awe and inspired me to explore the world of magic further.

B. From School Papers

No genuine school-paper Seen material was found for this lesson in the research pass. Nothing has been invented to fill this section.

C. Additional Practice

Fresh practice questions on this lesson, written from the lesson content.

(i) Why did the author go to stay at Anil′s house? **[Additional]**

Answer: The author went to stay at Anil′s house while Anil′s father was out of town.

(ii) Who told the boys ghost stories on the verandah, and what was her memory stored with? **[Additional]**

Answer: Anil′s mother told the boys ghost stories on the verandah. Her memory was stored with stories of spirits and incredible folklore.

(iii) What is a Munjia, and where does it live? **[Additional]**

Answer: A Munjia is a spirit that lives in a peepul tree. When it is annoyed, it rushes out from its tree and upsets tongas, bullock-carts, cycles and even a bus.

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(iv) How far could the boy who was a Jinn stretch his arm? **[Additional]**

Answer: The boy who was a Jinn could stretch his arm about four yards. He took a book from the cupboard and handed it to the teacher without moving from his seat.

(v) Why did Anil wish to be a Jinn? **[Additional]**

Answer: Anil wished to be a Jinn so that he could take advantage in games, especially in volleyball matches.

(vi) Why did Kamal and the author not want to go to their room? **[Additional]**

Answer: Kamal and the author did not want to go to their room because they were frightened by Anil′s mother′s ghost stories. They were afraid of ghosts.

(vii) What did Anil′s mother think when she saw the room empty? **[Additional]**

Answer: When Anil′s mother saw the room empty, she thought that the boys had also disappeared along with the beds. She said that their bed had also gone.

(viii) What did Anil′s mother mistake for ghosts, and what happened to her? **[Additional]**

Answer: Anil′s mother took the boys′ pajamas for ghosts. She gave a scream and collapsed on a cot.

(ix) What attracts a Jinn? **[Additional]**

Answer: Long hair and pretty black eyes, like Mulia′s, attract a Jinn.

(x) Why must one be careful while yawning under a peepul tree at night? **[Additional]**

Answer: One must be careful while yawning under a peepul tree at night because the Munjia will jump down one′s throat and completely ruin one′s digestion.

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