

## NCERT Solutions for Class 11

### English

#### Chapter 8 – The Tale Of Melon City

##### 1. Narrate 'The Tale of Melon City' in your own words.

**Ans:** For the benefit of the students, a model answer has been provided. It is extremely advised that pupils prepare their answers.

The Tale of Melon City is a couplet-based narrative poem composed by Vikram Seth. The poem tells the story of an occurrence in which the monarch and citizens met in a long-ago city. The story is lighthearted, with a strong emphasis on the theme. The poem is divided into three sections, the first of which describes a king's desire to construct an arch. The second section is about his concerns about the arch's shoddy construction, and the third part is about how his decree ultimately falls on him, resulting in his hanging and death. The poem tells the story of the transition of authority from the king to a melon, which became the state's symbolic head. The poet begins by recounting how long ago there was a monarch in a city. One day, the king announced his intention to build an arch over the main thoroughfare to increase the morale and mental well-being of the viewers. The monarch was righteous and devoted to peace. The construction work was quickly completed with the help of a huge number of laborers.

The king went to view the newly erected arch after it was finished. It had a pretty low arch. His crown shattered when it collided with the arch. The king, feeling dishonored, planned to hang the chief of construction. The hanging had been planned in detail. The Chief of Builders defended himself by transferring blame to the laborers. The king was persuaded by the reasoning and ordered that all of the laborers be hanged.

The duty was shifted to the size of the bricks by the laborers. As a result, the king ordered the masons to be hanged. The masons, for their part, defended themselves and blamed the architect. The king ordered the architect to be hanged. When the plan was shown to the king, the architect informed him that he (King) had made some changes to it. The architect blames the king in a roundabout way. Hearing the architect's explanation perplexed the king. The monarch sought the counsel of his kingdom's smartest man. As a result, the wisest man was tracked down and hauled

before the court. He couldn't walk or see since he was so elderly. He concluded that the arch was the real criminal. The arch had slammed into the crown, causing it to fall off. As a result, the arch must be hung.

As a result, the arch was guided to the scaffolding. Meanwhile, a councilor pointed out that hanging the arch that touched the king's crown would be a very dishonorable deed. The audience that had assembled to watch the criminal be hanged was becoming agitated. The king, sensing their mood, declared that someone must be executed since the nation demanded it. The noose had been hung.

It was a little high. Turn by turn, each individual was assessed. Only one man was tall enough to fit inside the noose, and that man was the King. The king was, interestingly, hanged. The third section of the poem is then narrated by the poet. The ministers exhaled a breath of relief when they realized they were able to select someone for hanging; otherwise, the riotous multitude would have risen in protest. It was necessary to appoint a new king following the death of the previous one. The ministers sent out the herald to announce that the next person to walk through the City Gate would choose a king. The City Gate was passed by an idiot. The guards inquired as to who would be the King. The idiot said that the next monarch should be picked from a melon. Because he enjoyed melons, that was his go-to response to any question. The ministers crowned a melon and reverently installed their Melon King on the throne.

According to the poet, the citizens were unconcerned with their symbolic heads. They were drawn to the concept of allowing things to happen. They treated their new ruler with great reverence because he did not meddle with their daily life.

## **2. What impression would you form of a state where the King was 'just and placid'?**

**Ans:** For the benefit of the students, a model answer has been provided. It is extremely advised that pupils prepare their answers.

Peace, liberty, and justice were enjoyed in a state where the ruler was just and calm. The king was only a title and a symbol. Citizens had complete independence in all aspects of their lives. The public was in charge of the country's genuine governance. The king had to be hanged in the poem "The Tale of a Melon City" because the populace demanded someone to be hanged. The king was powerless to protect himself. Even though the smartest man concluded that the arch was the real criminal,

the public demanded that someone is executed. The king was eventually hanged. This demonstrates that in a state where the king was just and peaceful, the inhabitants had a say in the king's fate.

### **3. How, according to you, can peace and liberty be maintained in a state?**

**Ans:** For the benefit of the students, a model answer has been provided. It is extremely advised that pupils prepare their answers. If there is Laissez-faire, or the principle of the king not interfering in the actions of the population, peace and liberty can be preserved in a state. The king or the government, on the other hand, must preserve law and order, failing which chaos may reign in the state. There should be a happy medium between government intrusion and citizen rights. Only then can one expect a state to retain peace and liberty.

### **4. Suggest a few instances in the poem which highlight humor and irony.**

**Ans:** For the benefit of the students, a model answer has been provided. It is extremely advised that pupils prepare their answers.

In the poem, the poet employs the devices of comedy and sarcasm. Humour is defined as cognitive experiences that cause a person to chuckle. The unexpected feature of a situation that is considerably different from what one anticipates is referred to as irony. The king's choice to hang the chief of the builders for erecting a low arch when his crown struck against it elicits laughs from the audience. It is a humorous example. It's also amusing to see how the king came to believe that the laborers who built the arch were to blame. The king intended the laborers to be hanged, but they were able to defend themselves. This circumstance is both hilarious and ironic in that it makes the readers chuckle and ironic in that the laborers can shift responsibility to the architect. The architect, ironically, is allowed to delegate the duty to the king himself. The choice of the wisest man to pronounce the verdict on who was the true criminal elicits laughter and is so amusing.

Finally, the elderly man blamed the arch and proclaimed that it must be hanged. One of the pastors pointed out, ironically, that the crowd wanted a guy to be hanged. The king was hanged because the noose fit his neck. The selection of a successor is amusing since an idiot is consulted in the process. The fool chooses a melon to serve as the state's symbolic leader.