



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
QUESTION BANK - THE THIEF'S STORY  
CLASS X (2024-25)

Broadly, *The Thief's Story* can be divided into:

- Hari Meets Anil
- Hari's Desire to Work For Anil
- Anil Educates Hari
- Anil's Unstable Income
- Anil Gets Robbed
- Hari's Dilemma
- Hari returns with Anil's money

Hari meets Anil

- Hari Singh was a fifteen-year-old thief.
- Hari Singh wasn't his real name. He used a different name every month to avoid getting caught.
- The first time Hari met Anil was at a wrestling match. Anil looked like the perfect mark – simple, kind and easy-going.

Hari's desire to work for Anil

- Hari approached Anil and complimented him on his looks.
- He told Anil he wanted to work for him.
- Anil replied that he couldn't pay him. So, Hari agreed to work for food and even lied that he could cook.
- So, Anil agreed and took him in.

Anil Educates Hari

- The dinner Hari made was so bad that Anil gave it to a stray dog and told Hari to leave.
- Anil relented. He let Hari stay and taught him how to cook.
- He also taught Hari how to write his name and promised that one day Hari would learn how to write whole sentences and add numbers.
- Hari found it easy to work for Anil. Every day he would make tea in the morning.
- Then, he would go to the market to buy supplies. He always made a rupee's profit every time.

Anil's Unstable Income

- Anil was a writer and did not make a steady income.

- When he did, he would go out and celebrate. When he didn't, he would borrow and worry about his next cheque.
- One day, Anil came home flush with several banknotes. He had just sold a book to a publisher.
- He safely hid the money under his mattress.

#### Anil Gets Robbed

- Hari made up his mind to steal the money Anil had got.
- He carefully extracted the money from under the mattress and ran until he came to the railway station.
- There, he slowed down and counted the money. There were six hundred rupees in the bundle!
- Hari thought he would live like a oil-rich Arab for a week.

#### Hari's Dilemma

- He came to the station. The Lucknow Express was just leaving the platform. If he ran, he could easily jump into one of the compartments. But something stopped him.
- Hari stood still and watched as the train left.
- Having nowhere to go, Hari started walking aimlessly and came to a *maidan* and sat on a bench thinking about Anil's reaction.
- Anil, he knew, would feel sad – not at the loss of money – but at the loss of trust.
- It started to rain. Soaked, Hari made his way back to the bazaar.
- He took out the notes. Then, he thought about his time spent with Anil.
- He remembered that Anil had promised to teach him to write whole sentences.
- One day, he thought, knowing whole sentences would bring him more than thieving could.
- After all, stealing was easy. But becoming a clever and well-respected man – that was better.

#### Hari Returns with Anil's Money

- Hari went back to Anil and put the money back under the mattress.
- The next day, when he woke up Anil was already making tea.
- Anil gave him a fifty rupee note as part of his wages. Then, he declared that they were going to learn whole sentences.
- Hari realised that Anil knew what had happened. But Anil didn't say anything.
- Moved, Hari gave Anil a smile – a genuine, heartfelt smile.

## **Theme**

The major themes of the chapter are:

- Trust vs Betrayal
- Importance of Values and Relationships

### **Trust vs Betrayal**

- The author brings out the theme of Trust v/s Betrayal through the two major characters of the story, Anil and Hari respectively.
- Anil trusts Hari and not only gives him shelter under his roof but also teaches him the skills of cooking and writing.
- Hari, on the other hand, robs Anil and flees.
- Through these instances, the author creates a striking contrast between the two characters and how they perceive the world.

### **Importance of Values and Relationships**

- The author reveals how human values and relations can change a person for better through Hari's character.
- Being a thief, Hari Singh was used to deceiving people and cheating them effortlessly. But the warmth of Anil's heart melted his harsh exterior and made him realise his folly and become a better person.

## **Key Takeaways**

- It is easy to judge someone but it takes character and strength to understand someone's situation and step in their shoes to see life from their lens. Anil is a quintessential example of Empathy who always empathized with Hari and understood that nobody had taught him basic manners and moral values and that is why he had become a thief.
- Genuineness always melts the heart of the other person and motivates him/her to amend their wrong ways and walk upon the right path and at last, because of Anil's genuineness Hari melted and took a firm decision to change his life and give his life a proper direction
- Guilty conscience always diminishes one's self-esteem and one must always abide by their conscience to live a satisfactory life.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER**

**1: What are Hari Singh's reactions to the prospect of receiving an education? Do they change over time? What makes him return to Anil?**

Hari Singh's reactions to the prospect of receiving an education change over time. When he started living with Anil he wanted to be literate so that he could become a more cunning cheat. Later on there is a change in his heart. He wants to earn respect in life. Probably he is influenced by the calm in Anil's life. Although, both of them depend on irregular sources of income, but Anil seems to be more satisfied. Hari Singh develops a desire to be part of the civilized society.

**2: Why does not Anil hand the thief over to the police? Do you think most people would have done so? In what ways is Anil different from such employers?**

The witness of notes must have given the idea of Hari Singh's act to Anil. But Anil is pleased with the fact that Hari returned whatever he had stolen. This must have given him a hope for Hari Singh's desire to change. That is why he did not hand over Hari to police. People like Anil are hard to find. Most people would have reacted in predictable ways by thrashing Hari Singh and calling police. Anil is different because he wants his servant to become literate. He wants his servant to lead a respectable life in future.

**3: Do you think people like Anil and Hari Singh are found only in fiction, or are there such people in real life?**

Both Anil and Hari Singh are rare in society. Especially the changed Hari Singh after he decides to go back to Anil is difficult to find.

**4. Do you think it a significant detail in the story that Anil is a struggling writer? Does this explain his behaviour in any way?**

Hari Singh's observation about Anil getting irregular income and Anil's statement about his sale of a book to a publisher indicates that he is a struggling writer. He lives life according to the flow of money he gets at a given time. When he gets the money he enjoys eating out with his friends. When he is having less money then he even doesn't accept paying salary to Hari Singh.

**5. Have you met anyone like Hari Singh? Can you think and imagine the circumstances that can turn a fifteen-year-old boy into a thief?**

I have met several people who help needy people and help them specially in becoming literate. Fifteenth year is a very dangerous phase of life as it is teenage. A deep scar on mind or a deep sense of greed can make criminal out of ordinary boys and girls. There is a chance of Hari Singh getting a sound rebuke from his parents for asking some costly thing. Or there is equal chance of Hari Singh spoiling his consumption pattern beyond his means.

**6: Where is the story set? Which language or languages are spoken in these places? Do you think the characters in the story spoke to each other in English?**

The story is set in Uttar Pradesh somewhere near Lucknow. The town is having an important railway station as express trains have stoppage over there. The presence of sweet shop indicates towards presence of a decent market. The description of hotels near railway station indicates that it is an important centre where people come from far off places for business related activities.

**SUMMARY**

Anil, a young man of 25, was a writer. He earned his living by writing books or articles for various magazines. He was a kind and simple man. Once, when he was watching a wrestling match, a young boy named Hari Singh approached him and expressed his desire to serve him. He said that he would cook for him. Anil believed him and gave him the job. Hari Singh was an expert thief and used to change his name and place to avoid the police and his old employers. He used to make money while buying supplies for Anil but

he did not seem to mind.

One day, he got a chance to steal Anil's money, from under the mattress. He ran away to go to another place by train. But his inner voice made him hesitate and he decided to return. He did not want to cheat a kind-hearted and simple man like Anil, who had trusted him. He also wanted Anil to teach him to write simple sentences. He immediately came back to Anil's house and placed the money as it was.

Next morning, Anil gave him fifty rupees and told him that he would pay him regularly. Anil forgave him as he wanted to give him another chance to improve.

### MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

Read the questions and choose the most appropriate answer.

1. Who is the narrator of the story?

- (i) Ruskin Bond
- (ii) Hari Singh**
- (iii) Anil
- (iv) Police

2. How old was the thief?

- (i) 25 yrs.
- (ii) 15yrs.**
- (iii) not given
- (iv) 18yrs

3. '*Flattery*' in the story means \_\_\_\_\_

- (i) sincere praise
- (ii) boasting
- (iii) insincere praise**
- (iv) appealing

4. What was the name of the shop above which Anil lived?

- (i) Laddu Sweet Shop
- (ii) Rasgulla Sweet Shop
- (iii) Jamun Sweet Shop
- (iv) Jumna Sweet Shop**

5. How was the meal Hari Singh cooked first night?

- (i) delicious
- (ii) mouth-watering
- (iii) finger-licking good
- (iv) terrible**

6. What did Anil do for a living?

- (i) Wrestling
- (ii) Wrote for magazines**
- (iii) Sports Correspondent
- (iv) Teacher

7. What was Anil doing when the thief boy met him?

- (i) wrestling with opponent
- (ii) watching a cricket match
- (iii) watching a wrestling match**
- (iv) writing a report

8. Who is easier to rob according to Hari Singh?

- (i) a careless man
- (ii) a greedy man**

(iii) a trusting man                      (iv) Anil

9. *'His face was clear and unlined...'*. What do you mean by the word "unlined"?

- (i) in a line    (ii) not covered  
(iii) showing no sign of worry or anxiety                      (iv) none of the above

### **REFERENCE TO CONTEXT:**

1. **"You look a bit of a wrestler yourself". I said A little flattery helps in making friends.**

(a) Who was the speaker? Who was he trying to flatter?

Hari Singh was the speaker and he was trying to flatter Anil.

(b) Why did the speaker want to be friends with the listener?

The speaker wanted to be friends with the listener because he wanted to rob him after gaining his trust.

(c) Find the antonym of 'criticism' in the extract.

The antonym is 'flattery'.

(d) What is the opposite of 'friends'?

'Enemies' is its opposite.

2. **"Well, it's time I did some real work, I told myself; I'm out of practice."**

(a) What 'real work' is the speaker talking about?

(b) Why does the speaker say 'I'm out of practice'?

(c) Give a synonym of 'practice'.

(d) What part of speech is the word 'real' in the extract?

Answer:

(a) The 'real work' in the extract refers to stealing.

(b) The speaker says so because he is a thief and he has not robbed anyone recently.

(c) Here, habit is a synonym of 'practice'.

(d) It is an adjective

3. **"He knew. But neither his lips nor his eyes showed anything".**

(a) Who is 'he' in the extract? What did he know?

'He' refers to Anil in the extract. He knew about the theft of his money.

(b) Why did he not show anything?

Anil did not show anything because he understood and Hari's return gave him the hope of a change in him.

(c) Which word in the extract means the same as 'reveal'?

'Showed' means the same as 'reveal'.

(d) What is the antonym of 'showed'?

'Hide' is its antonym.

4. **"When the train had gone, I found myself standing alone on the deserted platform. I had no idea where to spend the night. I had no friends."**

(a) Why was the speaker standing alone on the platform?

(b) Why did he not have any friends?

(c) Which word in the extract is an antonym of the word 'crowded'?

(d) What does 'deserted' mean?

Answer:

(a) The speaker was standing alone on the platform because a train had just left.

(b) The speaker did not have any friends because he thought that friends were more

trouble than help.

(c) The word is 'deserted'.

(d) It means empty.

### **SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS:**

**1. Anil walked away. I followed casually'. Why do you think the narrator followed Anil?**

The narrator's purpose of robbing Anil had not yet been served. He followed Anil to gain his trust and look for an opportunity that may help him give shape to his plans.

**2. What did Anil and Hari agree upon to be the mode of payment?**

When Anil stated his inability to pay Hari, Anil questioned Hari if he could feed Hari. Hari realised that he had misjudged his target and turned the situation for his benefit. Anil then agreed to feed him if he knew how to cook.

**3. Did Hari like working for Anil? Give reasons in support of your answer.**

Yes, Hari liked working for Anil. He was happy to carry on the chores for him and was grateful for the education he was receiving. He used to make profit of about a rupee a day as well, which was a decent amount besides being fed.

**4. What are the different reactions of the people when they are robbed?**

According to Hari Singh, different people react differently on being robbed. The greedy man displays fear, the rich man shows anger, and the poor man shows acceptance. However, a trusting man like Anil would be sad due to the loss of trust.

**5. Why was it difficult for Hari Singh to rob Anil?**

It was difficult to rob Anil because he was the most trusting person Hari Singh had ever met. According to Hari Singh, it's easy to rob a greedy man because he can afford to be robbed but it's difficult to rob a careless man because he doesn't even notice that he's been robbed and that takes all the pleasure out of the work.

**6. State the events that took place on the night of the theft.**

The night of robbery was quite eventful for Hari Singh. After stealing Anil's money and leaving Anil's house, Hari went to the railway station but didn't board the train to Lucknow. He walked slowly through the bazaar as he did not know anyone who would provide him shelter except Anil, for he didn't have any friends. He was forced to take shelter under the clock tower later when it started raining heavily. That is where he realised the importance of education and decided to go back to Anil.

**7. Had Anil really forgiven Hari Singh? Support your answer with evidence.**

Yes, Anil had forgiven Hari Singh. It is evident because Anil handed over to Hari a fifty rupee note as soon as Hari woke up. Though he knew that Hari had robbed the money at first but his subsequent actions gave him hope of change in Hari's character.

### **LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS:**

**1. Hari Singh didn't board the express train and return to Anil. Why did he return? What values do this incident highlight?**

Hari Singh was a thief and he had stolen Anil's money. After the theft, he realized that he

had robbed not only Anil but also himself of the chance of being literate and having a bright future. His conscience pricked him to think what all he could have gained had he not done this. It was difficult for him to rob Anil but it was tougher for him not to go back. He realized that he could not make tea, buy daily supplies and learn how to read and write then. His inner self did not agree to evade this and forced him to return. Hari's return to Anil shows that despite indulging in criminal acts, he still had a practical and positive attitude towards life. It is the awakening of Hari's conscience and Anil's love, trust and care that reformed Hari's character. It teaches us that love and trust can change a person. Anil understanding nature and care changed Hari's behaviour and helped him mend his ways for the good.

**2. Anil plays a major role in the transformation of Hari Singh. Comment on the statement by highlighting the values possessed by Anil which touched Hari's heart and made him return to his honest ways of earning his livelihood. Write in about 100-120 words.**

Anil was a struggling writer whom Hari Singh befriended. Hari Singh was an experienced, 15-year-old thief. He found Anil an easy target to steal. Anil agreed to allow him to stay with him and volunteered to teach to read and write. Gradually, Anil develops trust in Hari Singh. But Hari Singh was waiting for the right opportunity to do what he was best at. After stealing money, he tried to go away forever but some inner voice stopped him from doing so. He returned to Anil because he wanted to live a life of respect. Anil did not reveal that he knew the theft and accepted Hari back. Thus, the well-intentioned person, Anil changed Hari Singh and brought him on the right path. The story shows that trust and spirit to forgiveness can bring big changes in one's life.

**3. Money can't make a man as much as education can. Elucidate the statement.**

The statement stands true in almost all the aspects of life. Money may buy us all the luxuries and fulfil our needs but it cannot buy us knowledge, civilized thinking, skills and abilities to achieve our dreams. Education lays the foundation for all of us to act upon our goals according to our abilities. Education enables us to keep up with the fast-moving world. It opens the door to opportunities we do not know even exist. Money, on the other hand, can assist us to a certain level. It can buy us a plan but education gives us the knowledge of its execution. Just as in the story 'A Thief's Story', Hari Singh prioritized the chance of being literate over a few hundred rupees; we must understand that education can help us to achieve whatever we desire.

**Read the questions and the choose the appropriate answer:**

1- How has the narrator described Anil?

- (a) simple
- (b) kind
- (c) easy-going
- (d) all of the above**

2- What was Anil doing when the boy met him?

- (a) cooking vegetables for lunch
- (b) watching a wrestling match**
- (c) playing cricket with friends
- (d) writing an article for the magazine

3- How did the narrator attempt at being friends with Anil?

- (a) flattering him**



- 
- (b) teasing him
  - (c) introducing himself
  - (d) none of the above

4- What did the boy ask Anil for?

- (a) to give him food
- (b) to employ him**
- (c) to give him money
- (d) to teach him

5- How often did he change his name?

- (a) every day
- (b) every week
- (c) every month**
- (d) every year

6- He changed his name in order to stay ahead of \_\_\_\_\_

- (a) police
- (b) employers
- (c) none of them
- (d) both of them**

7- How was the meal he cooked first night?

- (a) delicious
- (b) mouth-watering
- (c) finger-licking good
- (d) terrible**

8. How did Hari Singh infer that about his food cooked first night?

- (a) Anil said he liked it
- (b) Anil couldn't have enough of it
- (c) Anil was licking his fingers
- (d) Anil gave it to a stray dog**

9- What did Anil promise him to teach?

- (a) write his name
- (b) cook food
- (c) write full sentences
- (d) all of the above**

10- Who was the most trusting person narrator had ever met?

- (a) Anil**
- (b) publisher
- (c) Anil's friends
- (d) none of the above

11- Who is easier to rob?

- (a) a careless man
- (b) a greedy man**
- (c) a trusting man

(d) Anil

12- Based on your understanding of Anil in the extract, choose the option that synchronizes with his thinking.

**a) So, what if I don't have much money? Giving it to that person is important as they could do with a helping hand.**

b) I better learn how to protect my money. I think I'm being looted.

c) I earn money with such tremendous effort. Where does it all go?

d) When I become rich, I can begin to help friends then. Right now, I will spend only on myself.

### **TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

#### **1: Who does 'I' refer to in this story?**

In the story, 'I' refers to the narrator of the story Hari Singh, who was a fifteen- year-old experienced thief.

#### **2: What is he "a fairly successful hand" at?**

He had "a fairly successful hand" at stealing and robbing people. By this he meant that he was an experienced thief who was very swift and clean in his work while robbing people without getting caught.

#### **3: What does he get from Anil in return for his work?**

When Hari approached Anil for work, Anil told him clearly that he could not pay him for it. So, he asked Hari to cook so he can feed him and stay with him. But when he found out that the young boy didn't know how to cook, he taught him to cook and how to write his name. Anil also promised to teach him to write whole sentences and calculate numbers. Besides, Anil also gave money to Hari to buy the daily supplies and the latter would make a rupee profit a day from it.

### **Read and Find Out (Page 10)**

#### **1: How does the thief think Anil will react to the theft?**

Hari, the thief thought that on discovering his theft, Anil would be filled with sadness not because of the loss of money but for losing the trust he had in him.

#### **2: What does he say about the different reactions of people when they are robbed?**

In his short career as a thief, Hari's experience had made him aware of the different reactions of people when they were robbed. According to him, a greedy man showed fear; the rich men exhibited anger and a poor man showed acceptance.

#### **3: Does Anil realise that he has been robbed?**

Yes, Anil realised that he had been robbed by Hari. Probably, he came to know of it from the damp notes which got wet due to rain in the previous night. However, he didn't express anything and gave a fifty rupee note to Hari and promised to pay him regularly.

### **Think about it (Page 13)**

**1: What are Hari Singh's reactions to the prospect of receiving an education? Do they change over time? (Hint: Compare, for example, the thought: "I knew that once I could write like an educated man there would be no limit to what I could achieve" with**

**these later thoughts:**

**“Whole sentences, I knew, could one day bring me more than a few hundred rupees. It was a simple matter to steal — and sometimes just as simple to be caught. But to be a really big man, a clever and respected man, was something else.”) What makes him return to Anil?**

Hari was grateful to Anil who taught him how to write his name. He was excited to learn that Anil would teach him to write whole sentences too. He understood that being an educated man will add to his abilities and help him to achieve a social status in life. But when he stole money and left Anil’s house, he realised that stealing was an utter crime to indulge himself and he might soon get caught, but being educated was a more fulfilling experience. He comprehended the respect, reputation and possibilities that he would be able to achieve if he becomes educated. Hence, he was feeling guilty for cheating a noble man who gave him food and shelter. Besides, his urge to receive education also compelled him to return to Anil’s house.

### **Multiple Choice Questions based on an extract**

**(A) Anil was watching a wrestling match when I approached him. He was about 25-- a tall, lean fellow – and he looked easy-going, kind and simple enough for my purpose. I hadn’t had much luck of late and thought I might be able to get into the young man’s confidence.**

**‘You look a bit of a wrestler yourself,’ I said. A little flattery helps in making friends.**

**i. According to the extract, the young boy was watching the wrestling match because he**

- a) had been invited there by the wrestlers.
- b) was supposed to meet someone there.
- c) was looking for simple people to dupe.
- d) loved wrestling and followed it very closely.

**Answer: c) was looking for simple people to dupe.**

**ii. ‘I hadn’t had much luck of late’ means that the boy hadn’t**

- a) ever conned people successfully.
- b) been successful in duping people lately.
- c) understood the consequences of thievery till date.
- d) considered the role of fate in deceiving others.

**Answer: b) been successful in duping people lately.**

**iii. 'I might be able to get into the young man's confidence.' Choose the option that DOES NOT display what the statement means.**

- a) He wanted to win his trust.
- b) He wanted him to share his thoughts without caution.
- c) He wanted him to feel comfortable revealing more details about himself.
- d) He wanted to be able to spend quality time with him.

**Answer: d) He wanted to be able to spend quality time with him.**

**iv. Anil looked easy-going, kind and simple to the narrator. Which of the given characteristics would NOT fit in with this description?**

- a) compassionate
- b) suave
- c) uncomplicated
- d) carefree

**Answer: b) suave**

**v. Based on the line, "A little flattery helps in making friends.", choose the option that displays the quote closest in meaning.**

- a) Imitation is the best form of flattery; people generally understand that my comedy is not intended to hurt anybody
- b) I know imitation is the highest form of flattery, but stealing one's identity is totally different.
- c) Nothing is so great an example of bad manners as flattery. If you flatter all the company, you please none; if you flatter only one or two, you offend the rest.
- d) One may define flattery as a base companionship which is most advantageous to the flatterer.

**Answer: d) One may define flattery as a base companionship which is most advantageous to the flatterer.**

**(B) I think he knew I made a little money this way but he did not seem to mind. Anil made money by fits and starts. He would borrow one week, lend the next. He kept worrying about his next cheque, but as soon as it arrived, he would go out and celebrate. It seems he wrote for magazines—a queer way to make a living!**

**i. Anil made money 'by fits and starts' means that he**

- a) deemed it fit to start investing money.
- b) started earning money in the recent past.
- c) received money intermittently.
- d) put his money to use frequently.

**Answer: c) received money intermittently.**

**ii. The information in the extract suggests that Anil could be a**

- a) salaried professional
- b) freelancer
- c) business man
- d) volunteer

**Answer: b) freelancer**

**iii. If borrow: :lend, then pick the ODD pair from the options below**

- a) give :: take
- b) lose :: find
- c) hop :: skip
- d) buy :: sell

**Answer: c) hop :: skip**

**iv. The reference to making a little money 'this way' refers to a way that is viewed by most people as**

- a) sensible.
- b) inappropriate.
- c) charitable.
- d) Aggressive

**Answer: c) charitable.**

**v. Based on your understanding of Anil in the extract, choose the option that synchronises with his thinking.**

- a) So what if I don't have much money? Giving it to that person is important as they could do with a helping hand.
- b) I better learn how to protect my money. I think I'm being looted.
- c) I earn money with such tremendous effort. Where does it all go?
- d) When I become rich, I can begin to help friends then. Right now, I will spend only on myself.

**Answer: a) So what if I don't have much money? Giving it to that person is important as they could do with a helping hand.**