

7TH GRADE**Lesson 28, School Days 83-87 (5 school days)****“Rikki-tikki-tavi”****by Rudyard Kipling: Fiction**

- 1. Research and Internet Practice:** Get on Wikipedia and look up Rudyard Kipling. Read as much as you can in two hours about this great Nobel-Prize-winning author and poet.
- 2. Research Component: Read the following information about Kipling’s childhood:** As a young boy, Kipling and his sister were housed for seven years with a British couple while his parents worked on the other side of the world in India. It was standard practice for most upper-class British children to be sent off to boarding schools and other similar lodgings. His parents did not know that little Rudyard was being systematically bullied, humiliated, brutalized and otherwise abused by the couple paid to house and feed him. Concerning those horrible years of his childhood, Kipling wrote, “Often and often afterwards, the beloved Aunt would ask me why I had never told anyone how I was being treated. Children tell little more than animals, for what comes to them they accept as eternally established. Also, badly-treated children have a clear notion of what they are likely to get if they betray the secrets of a prison-house before they are clear of it.” Nevertheless, Kipling ascribes much credit to those abusive years, suggesting that they somehow helped him later to become a good story-teller. He once wrote, “If you cross-examine a child of seven or eight on his day’s doings (specially when he wants to go to sleep) he will contradict himself very satisfactorily. If each contradiction be set down as a lie and retailed at breakfast, life is not easy. I have known a certain amount of bullying, but this was calculated torture—religious as well as scientific. Yet it made me give attention to the lies I soon found it necessary to tell: and this, I presume, is the foundation of literary effort.”
- 3.** Write a researched essay (Minimum of 600 words and three sources cited) on the negative consequences of sending children away to boarding schools and other such lodgings away from their families for long periods of time.
- 4.** Look up info about the small predatory animal called a mongoose and its interaction with snakes. Write a couple hundred words about the topic.
- 5. Read the Kipling story** in your textbook, answering Comprehension Questions as you go through the story.
- 6. Comprehension/Discussion Questions:**
 - a. How did the people revive the half-drowned mongoose at the beginning of the story?
 - b. What did Rikki-tikki-tavi like to eat?
 - c. Why did Rikki-tikki-tavi decide to stay with this new family?
 - d. How can you tell that the mongoose is a very cautious animal?
 - e. Why was the Tailorbird family so upset?
 - f. How did Nagaina first try to kill Rikki-tikki-tavi?
 - g. What prevented Nag from killing Darzee in his nest?
 - h. What does it mean when a mongoose’s eyes get red?

- i. Why is the little karait snake actually more dangerous than a huge king cobra?
- j. Why was fighting Karait so dangerous for Rikki-tikki-tavi?
- k. How did Rikki-tikki-tavi learn that Nag and Nagaina planned to kill all the people in the house?
- l. What exactly was Nag's plan for killing the man of the house?
- m. Describe what happened to Nag after he was killed.
- n. How did Rikki-tikki-tavi learn where Nagaina kept her eggs hidden?
- o. Why was Darzee's wife careful not to look at Nagaina's eyes?
- p. Why was the human family sitting so still when Rikki came to the veranda?
- q. Describe his battle with Nagaina.

Vocabulary Study Guide.

cantonment: English military camp in occupied India

gait: manner of walking or running

castor-oil: oil from a bean which is used as a laxative

providence: God's generosity care and provision

sluice: waterway; pipe

purchase: advantageous hold on an adversary

mourning: sadness due to a death

consolation: solace and comforting after a loss

cunningly: in a smart but sneaky manner

bantam: tiny breed of chicken

veranda: roofed area outside a house

bounding: leaping

Coppersmith: Asian bird with red-streaked belly & metallic call

covered: slinked down like a dog afraid it will be hit

Brahma: Hindu creator god

spectacle: amazing visual display (usually negative)

hook-and-eye: fasteners of shoes, etc.

fledglings: baby birds

karait: small but highly venomous Asian cobra

bottle-brush: thin bristly tool to clean out bottles

revived: brought back to life; perked up

draggled: got something dirty and wet by dragging through mud

bungalow: one story house with a big porch

tailorbird: Asian bird that sews its nest together with natural fibers

Quizzes on vocabulary.**Quiz A:**

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|-------------------------|--|
| ___ cantonment: | a. God's generosity care and provision |
| ___ gait: | b. manner of walking or running |
| ___ castor-oil: | c. advantageous hold on an adversary |
| ___ providence: | d. leaping |
| ___ sluice: | e. tiny breed of chicken |
| ___ purchase: | f. English military camp in occupied India |
| ___ mourning: | g. sadness due to a death |
| ___ consolation: | h. waterway; pipe |
| ___ cunningly: | i. solace and comforting after a loss |
| ___ bantam: | j. in a smart but sneaky manner |
| ___ veranda: | k. oil from a bean which is used as a laxative |
| ___ bounding: | l. roofed area outside a house |

Quiz B:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| ___ coppersmith: | a. fastener of shoes, etc. |
| ___ cowered: | b. amazing visual display (usually negative) |
| ___ Brahma: | c. Hindu creator god |
| ___ spectacle: | d. one story house with a big porch |
| ___ hook-and-eye: | e. thin bristly tool to clean out bottles |
| ___ fledglings: | f. got something dirty and wet by dragging through mud |
| ___ karait: | g. Asian bird with red-streaked belly & metallic call |
| ___ bottle-brush: | h. Asian bird that sews its nest together with natural fibers |
| ___ revived: | i. small but highly venomous Asian cobra |
| ___ draggled: | j. slinked down like a dog afraid it will be hit |
| ___ bungalow: | k. baby birds |
| ___ tailorbird: | l. brought back to life; perked up |

Vocab. Keys:

A	B
f	g
b	j
k	c
a	b
h	a
c	k
g	i
i	e
j	l
e	f
l	d
d	h