



: UNIT STRUCTURE :

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10.0 OBJECTIVES

- To know about R.K.Narayan's contribution in English literature
- To understand the short story 'Gateman's Gift' by Hawthorne
- To know the themes, characters, and symbols present in the short story
- To understand the whole story by taking into consideration various aspects about it and analyse it critically.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

R.K. Narayan, in full Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan, original name Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayanswami, (born October 10, 1906, Madras [Chennai], India—died May 13, 2001, Madras), one of the finest Indian authors of his generation writing in English.

Reared by his grandmother, Narayan completed his education in 1930 and briefly worked as a teacher before deciding to devote himself to writing. His first novel, *Swami and Friends* (1935), is an episodic narrative recounting the adventures of a group of schoolboys. That book and much of Narayan's later works are set in the fictitious South Indian town of Malgudi. Narayan typically portrays the peculiarities of human relationships and the ironies of Indian daily life, in which modern urban existence clashes with ancient tradition. His style is graceful, marked by genial humour, elegance, and simplicity.

Among the best-received of Narayan's 34 novels are *The English Teacher* (1945), *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), *The Guide* (1958), *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* (1961), *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), and *A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983). Narayan also wrote a number of short stories; collections

include *Lawley Road* (1956), *A Horse and Two Goats and Other Stories* (1970), *Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories* (1985), and *The Grandmother's Tale* (1993). In addition to works of non-fiction (chiefly memoirs), he also published shortened modern prose versions of two Indian epics, *The Ramayana* (1972) and *The Mahabharata* (1978).

'GATEMAN'S GIFT' BY
R.K.NARAYAN

10.2 THE STORY 'GATEMAN'S GIFT'

WHEN a dozen persons question openly or slyly a man's sanity, he begins to entertain serious doubts himself. This is what happened to ex-gateman Govind Singh. And you could not blame the public either. What could you do with a man who carried about in his hand a registered postal cover and asked: "Please tell me what there is inside?" The obvious answer was: "Open it and see..." He seemed horrified at this suggestion. "Oh, no, no, can't do it," he declared and moved off to another friend and acquaintance. Everywhere the suggestion was the same till he thought everyone had turned mad. And then somebody said: "If you don't like to open it and yet want to know what is inside you must take it to the X-ray Institute." This was suggested by an ex-compounder who lived in the next street. "What is it?" asked Govind Singh. It was explained to him. "Where is it?" He was directed to the City X-ray Institute. But before saying anything further about his progress, it would be useful to go back to an earlier chapter in his history. After war service in 1914-18, he came to be recommended for a gatekeeper's post at Engladia's. He liked the job very much. He was given a khaki uniform, a resplendent band across his shoulder and a short stick. He gripped the stick and sat down on a stool at the entrance to the office. And when his chief's car pulled up at the gate he stood at attention and gave a military salute. The office consisted of a staff numbering over a hundred and as they trooped in and out every day, he kept an eye on them. At the end of the day, he awaited the footsteps of the General Manager coming down the stairs and rose stiffly and stood at attention, and after he left the hundreds of staff poured out. The doors were shut; Singh carried his stool in, placed it under the staircase, and placed his stick across it. Then he came out and the main door was locked and sealed. In this way, he had spent twenty-five years of service, and then he begged to be pensioned off. He would not have thought of retirement yet, but for the fact that he found his sight and hearing playing tricks on him; he could not catch the Manager's footsteps on the stairs, and it was hard to recognize him even at ten yards. He was ushered into the presence of the chief, who looked up for a moment from his papers and muttered: "We are very pleased with your work for us, and the company will give you a pension of twelve rupees for your life..." Singh clicked his heels, saluted, turned on his heel and went out of the room, with his heart brimming with gratitude and pride. This was the second occasion when the great man had spoken to him, the first being on the first day of his service. As he had stood at his post, the chief, entering the office just then, looked up for a moment and asked "Who are you?" "I'm the new gatekeeper, master," he had answered. And he spoke again only on this day. Though so little was said, Singh felt electrified on both occasions by the words of his master. In Singh's eyes, the chief had acquired a sort of Godhood, and it would be quite adequate if a god spoke to one only once or twice in a lifetime. In mo-

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ments of contemplation, Singh's mind dwelt on the words of his master, and on his personality. His life moved on smoothly. The pension together with what his wife earned by washing and sweeping in a couple of houses was quite sufficient for him. He ate his food, went out and met a few friends, slept, and spent some evenings sitting at a cigarette shop, which his cousin owned. This tenor of life was disturbed on the first of every month when he donned his old khaki suit, walked to his old office, and salaamed the Accountant at the counter and received his pension. Sometimes if it was closing, he waited on the roadside for the General Manager to come down, and saluted him as he got into his car. There was a lot of time all around him, an immense sea of leisure. In this state, he made a new discovery about himself, that he could make fascinating models out of clay and wood dust. The discovery came suddenly, when one day a child in the neighbourhood brought to him its little doll for repair. He not only repaired it but also made a new thing of it. This discovery pleased him so much that he very soon became absorbed in it. His backyard gave him a plentiful supply of pliant clay, and the carpenter's shop next to his cousin's cigarette shop sawdust. He purchased paint for a few annas. And lo! He found his hours gliding. He sat there in the front part of his home, bent over his clay, and brought into existence a miniature universe; all the colours of life were there, all the forms and creatures, but of the size of his middle finger; whole villages and towns were there, all the persons he had seen passing before his office when he was sentry there that beggar woman coming at midday, and that cucumber vendor; he had the eye of a cartoonist for human faces. Everything went down into clay. It was a wonderful miniature reflection of the world; and he mounted them neatly on thin wooden slices, which enhanced their attractiveness. He kept these in his cousin's shop and they attracted huge crowds every day and sold very briskly. More than the sales Singh felt an ecstasy when he saw admiring crowds clustering around his handiwork. On his next pension day he carried to his office a street scene (which he ranked as his best), and handed it over the counter to the Accountant with the request: "Give this to the Sahib, please!" "All right,*" said the Accountant with a smile. It created a sensation in the office and disturbed the routine of office working for nearly half an hour. On the next pension day, he carried another model (children at play) and handed it over the counter. "Did Sahib like the last one?" "Yes, he liked it." "Please give this one to him" and he passed it over the counter. He made it a convention to carry on every pension day an offering for his master, and each time his greatest reward was the Accountant's stock reply to his question: "What did the Sahib say?" "He said it was very good." At last he made his masterpiece. A model of his office frontage with himself at his post, a car at the entrance, and the chief getting down; this composite model was so realistic that while he sat looking at it, he seemed to be carried back to his office days. He passed it over the counter on his pension day and it created a very great sensation in the office. "Fellow, you have not left yourself out, either!" People cried and looked admiringly at Singh. A sudden fear seized Singh and he asked: "The master won't be angry, I hope?" "No, no, why should he be?" said the Accountant, and Singh received his pension and went home. A week later when he was sitting on the fyol kneading clay, the postman came and said: "registered letter for you . . ." "For me! " Any letter would have upset Singh he had received

less than three letters in his lifetime, and each time it was a torture for him till the contents were read out. Now a registered letter! This was his first registered letter. "Only lawyers send registered letters, isn't it so?" "Usually," said the postman. Please take it back. I don't want it," said Singh. Shall I say 'Refused'?" asked the postman. "No, no," said Singh. "Just take it back and say you have not found me . . ." "That I can't do . . .," said the postman looking serious. Singh seemed to have no option but to scrawl his signature and receive the packet. He sat gloomily gazing at the floor. His wife who had gone out and just returned saw him in this condition and asked: "What is it?" His voice choked as he replied: "It has come." He flung at her the registered letter. "What is it?" she asked. He said: "How should I know. Perhaps our ruin . . ." He broke down. His wife watched him for a moment, went in to attend to some domestic duty and returned, still found him in the same condition, and asked: "Why not open it and see, ask someone to read it?" He threw up his arms in horror: "Woman, you don't know what you are saying. It cannot be opened. They have perhaps written that my pension is stopped, and God knows what else the Sahib has said . . ." "Why not go to the office and find out from them?" "Not I! I will never show my face there again . . .," replied Singh. "I have lived without a single remark being made against me, all my life. Now! He shuddered at the thought of it." I knew I was getting into trouble when I made that office model . . ." After deeper reflection he said: "Every time I took something there, people crowded round, stopped all work for nearly an hour . . . That must also have reached the Sahib's ears." He wandered about saying the same thing, with the letter in his pocket. He lost taste for food, wandered about unkempt, with his hair standing up like a halo an unaccustomed sight, his years in military service having given him a habitual tidiness. His wife lost all peace of mind and became miserable about him. He stood at the crossroads, clutching the letter in his hand. He kept asking everyone he came across: "Tell me, what there is in this?" "But he would not brook the suggestion to open it and see its contents. So forthwith Singh found his way to the City X-ray Institute at Race Course Road. As he entered the gate, he observed dozens of cars parked along the drive, and a Gurkha watchman at the gate. Some people were sitting on sofas reading books and journals. They turned and threw a brief look at him and resumed their studies. As Singh stood uncertainly at the doorway, an assistant came up and asked: SO GATEMAN'S GIFT "What do you want?" Singh gave a salute, held up the letter uncertainly and muttered: "Can I know what is inside this?" The assistant made the obvious suggestion. But Singh replied: "They said you could tell me what's inside without opening it." The assistant asked: "Where do you come from?" Singh explained his life, work and outlook and concluded: "I've lived without remark all my life. I knew trouble was coming." There were tears on his cheeks. The assistant looked at him curiously, as scores of others had done before, smiled, and said: "Go home and rest. You are not all right . . . Go, go home." "Can't you say what is in this?" Singh asked pathetically. The assistant took it in his hand, examined it and said: "Shall I open it?" "No, no, no," Singh cried and snatched it back. There was a look of terror in his eyes. The assembly looked up from their pages and watched him with mild amusement in their eyes. The assistant kindly put his arms on his shoulder and led him out. "You get well first, and then come back. I tell you

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are not all right.” Walking back home, he pondered over it. “Why are they all behaving like this, as if I were a mad man?” When this word came to his mind, he stopped abruptly in the middle of the road, and cried.” OH! That’s it, is that it? Mad! Mad!” He shook his head gleefully as if the full truth had just dawned upon him. He now understood the looks that people threw at him. “Oh! Oh! “He cried aloud. He laughed. He felt a curious relief at this realization. “I have been mad and didn’t know it . . .” He cast his mind back. Every little action of his for the last so many days seemed mad; particularly the dollmaking. “What sane man would make clay dolls after 25 years of respectable service in an office?” He felt a tremendous freedom of limbs, and didn’t feel it possible to walk at an ordinary pace. He wanted to fly. He swung his arms up and down and ran on with a whoop. He ran through the Market Road. When people stood about and watched he cried: “Hey, don’t laugh at a mad man, for who knows, you will also be mad when you come to make clay dolls,” and charged into their midst with a war cry. When he saw children coming out of a school, he felt it would be nice to amuse their young hearts by behaving like a tiger. So he fell on his hands and knees and crawled up to them with a growl. He went home in a terrifying condition. His wife who was grinding chilly in the backyard looked up and asked: “What is this? “His hair was covered with street dust; his body was splashed with mud. He could not answer because he choked with mirth as he said: “Fancy what has happened!” “What is it?” “I’m mad, mad.” He looked at his workbasket in a corner, scooped out the clay and made a helmet out of it and put it on his head. Ranged on the floor was his latest handiwork. After his last visit to the office, he had been engaged in making a model village. It was a resplendent group; a dun road, red tiles, green coconut trees swaying, and the colour of the sarees of the village women carrying water pots. He derived the inspiration for it from a memory of his own village days. It was the most enjoyable piece of work that he had so far undertaken. He lived in a kind of ecstasy while doing it. “I am going to keep this for myself. A memento of my father’s village,” he declared. “I will show it at an exhibition, where they will give me a medal.’ 9 He guarded it like a treasure: when it was wet, he never allowed his wife to walk within ten yards of it.” Keep off, we don’t want your foot dust for this village . . .” Now in his madness, he looked down on it. He raised his foot and stamped everything down into a multi-coloured jam. They were still half-wet. He saw a donkey grazing in the street. He gathered up the jam and flung it at the donkey with the remark: “Eat this if you like. It is a nice village . . .” And he went out on a second round. This was a quieter outing. He strode on at an even pace, breathing deeply, with the clay helmet on, out of which peeped his grey hair, his arms locked behind, his fingers clutching the fateful letter, his face tilted towards the sky. He walked down the Market Road, with a feeling that he was the sole occupant of this globe: his madness had given him a sense of limitless freedom, strength and buoyancy. The remarks and jeers of the crowds gaping at him did not in the least touch him. While he walked thus, his eye fell on the bulb of a tall street lamp: “Bulb of the size of a Papaya fruit!” he muttered and chuckled. It had been a long cherished desire in him to fling a stone at it; now he felt, in his joyous and free condition, that he was free from the trammels of convention and need not push back any inclination. He picked up a pebble and threw it with good aim. The

shattering noise of glass was as music to his ears. A policeman put his hand on his shoulder: "Why did you do it?" Singh looked indignant: "I like to crack glass Papaya fruit, GATEMAN'S GIFT 33 that is all/ 1 was the reply. The constable said: "Come to the station." "Oh, yes, when I was in Mesopotamia they put me on half ration once," he said, and walked on to the station. He paused, tilted his head to the side and remarked: "This road is not straight ..." A few carriages and cycles were coming up to him. He found that everything was wrong about them. They seemed to need some advice in the matter. He stopped in the middle of the road, stretched out his arms and shouted: "Halt!" The carriages stopped, the cyclists jumped off and Singh began a lecture: "When I was in Mesopotamia I will tell you fellows who don't know anything about anything." The policeman dragged him away to the side, and waved to the traffic to resume. One of the cyclists who resumed, jumped off the saddle again and came towards him with: "Why! It is Singh, Singh, what fancy dress is this? What is the matter?" "Even through the haze of his insane vision Singh could recognize the voice and the person the Accountant at the office. Singh clicked his heels and gave a salute: "Excuse me sir, didn't intend to stop you. You may pass . . ." He pointed the way generously, and the Accountant saw the letter in his hand. He recognized it although it was mud-stained and crumpled. "Singh, you got our letter?" "Yes, sir, Pass. Do not speak of it. . ." "What is the matter?" He snatched it from his hand. "Why haven't you opened it?" He tore open the envelope, took out of it a letter, and read aloud: "The General Manager greatly appreciates the very artistic models you have sent, and he is pleased to sanction a reward of Rs. 100 and hopes it will be an encouragement for you to keep up this interesting hobby". It was translated to him word for word, and the enclosure, a cheque for one hundred rupees, was handed to him. A big crowd gathered to watch this scene. Singh pressed the letter to his eyes. He beat his brow, and wailed: "Tell me, sir, am I mad or not?" "You look quite well, you aren't mad," said the Accountant. Singh fell at his feet and said with tears choking his voice: "You are a god, sir, to say that I am not mad. I am so happy to hear it." On the next pension day he turned up spruce as ever at the office counter. As they handed him the envelope they asked: "What toys are you making now?" "Nothing sir. Never again. It is no occupation for a sane man . . ." he said, received his pension, and stiffly walked out of the office.

10.3 THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE STORY

In 'Gateman's Gift' by R.K. Narayan, we have the theme of fear, paralysis, insecurity, suffering, social opinion, pride and identity. Taken from his *Malgudi Days* collection the story is narrated in the third person by an unnamed narrator and after reading the story the reader realises that Narayan may be exploring the theme of fear. Singh lives in fear of opening the registered letter that has been sent to him. So crippling is Singh's fear that he believes himself to be going mad. Though the logical thing to do would be to open the letter and discover whether the letter holds good or bad news Singh isn't able to do this. It is also interesting that Singh loses interest in his clay modelling because of the fear he feels over the letter. This loss of interest is important as it highlights just how overpowering the fear is for Singh. It is also interesting that Singh never thinks about just getting over what may be in the letter if the contents of the letter are of a bad nature. It is as though he

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would rather not know whether the letter contains good or bad news. If anything, there is a sense of paralysis in the story. Singh is unable to move forward as long as he leaves the letter unopened. Rather he believes himself to be going mad based solely on the opinions of others. Which may suggest that Singh may be somewhat insecure about his identity. He doesn't appear to have the strength to trust his own mind and is swayed by social opinion.

The fact that some of Singh's clay models are copies of his old work environment may also be important as it suggests that Singh remembers with fondness his time as a Gateman. It may also be significant that Singh fears he may have upset his old boss by bringing the models into the pension office when Singh was collecting his pension. As this suggests that Singh still respects his old boss and does not wish to upset him. Singh's respect for his old boss is mirrored by his boss' respect for him. Something that is noticeable when the accountant opens the letter for Singh and the reader realises that Singh's old boss admires all his clay models. Admires them so much that he has given him an extra one hundred rupees. There is also no doubting that Singh suffers, because of his fear, throughout the story. However, Singh's wife also suffers and after the letter arrives and remains unopened, she is careful. So careful that she stays out of Singh's way.

It might also be a case that Narayan is exploring the theme of pride. Singh is proud of his job as a Gateman. While some critics might suggest that, his role is at the lower end of the employment scale. Singh doesn't look at things like that. He is happy to be able to be part of something. To have some responsibility and to get paid for it too. The village that Singh makes that reminds him of his father's village also appears to be the one clay model that Singh is so much proud of. It is as though the model of the village is part of Singh's identity. Yet he destroys it in a moment of madness all because of his fear to open the letter. Though it is clear that Singh is not really mad he does through stress do things that would be deemed inappropriate. One of these things is the breaking of the bulb, which results in Singh being arrested, which the reader suspects are out of character for Singh. At no other stage of the story has Singh been in trouble.

The end of the story is also interesting as Singh despite the praises of his boss, gives up making clay models. It's difficult to say for certain as to why this might be but it is possible that Singh is equating the clay modelling to the madness he went through. However, the reader is aware that the real problem for Singh was the fact that he was afraid to open the letter. Singh believes more in living a structured life than a creative one and appears to associate creativity with madness. Though some critics might suggest that there is a definable link between creativity and madness it is important to remember that prior to the letter arriving Singh was happy making clay models. If anything Singh's life at the end of the story is still full of fear. No longer is he worried about the letter instead he is afraid to be creative despite the fact that many people have told him how good he is at clay modelling. Which suggests that the paralysis Singh felt when he first received the letter also remains. Singh has retired from his job and is happy to collect his pension every week but he doesn't appear to do anything else now that he has stopped clay modelling.

Prajapati P. Shah published an essay in *Literary Criterion* in 1980, called "R.K. Narayan's 'Gateman's Gift': The Central Theme." Shah's reading focused not on the mimetic nature of the Singh's art, but on his status as a marginalized figure in the socio-economic life of the town. According to this interpretation, Singh's transgression is his presumption of a creative role discouraged by the capitalist system which has structured every aspect of his life. It's a little bit Marxist and there's more than a little truth in this interpretation.

10.4 CHARACTERS

The protagonist in the story is Govind Singh who worked as a Gatekeeper. The entire story centres on him. The second major character is the Accountant who opens the registered letter that Singh had received and misunderstood. The Accountant tells Singh what the letter says. But by that time Singh has already become almost a mad man full of fear. Minor characters include the Manager and Singh's wife. The Manager holds a Godly status in Singh's life. Singh's plan to gift the clay models to the Manager triggers the problem. The letter of appreciation from the Manager is mistaken as the letter for stopping his pension. Singh starts thinking that his gifts might have made the Manager angry. Ignorance leads to disaster. In this story, thus, there are few characters.

10.5 IRONY IN THE STORY

The irony in this story is that Singh's gift, which once used to bring hopes of a happier life turns his life upside down. He wanted to please the Manager by gifting him his creations but that becomes the reason for his own unhappiness and filled his life with an unnecessary fear. The feeling of fear is so severe that Singh even after knowing that the letter was to appreciate his talent chooses never to do clay modelling again. Thus, it is the biggest irony of Singh's post-retirement life.

10.6 WRITING STYLE

Narayan's writing technique is unpretentious with a natural element of humour about it. It focused on ordinary people, reminding the reader of next-door neighbours, cousins and the like, thereby providing a greater ability to relate to the topic. Unlike his national contemporaries, he was able to write about the intricacies of Indian society without having to modify his characteristic simplicity to conform to trends and fashions in fiction writing. He also employed the use of nuanced dialogic prose with gentle Tamil overtones based on the nature of his characters. Critics have considered Narayan to be the *Indian Chekhov*, due to the similarities in their writings, the simplicity and the gentle beauty and humour in tragic situations. Greene considered Narayan to be more similar to Chekhov than any Indian writer.[3] Anthony West of *The New Yorker* considered Narayan's writings to be of the realism variety of Nikolai Gogol.

According to Pulitzer Prize winner Jhumpa Lahiri, Narayan's short stories have the same captivating feeling as his novels, with most of them less than ten pages long, and taking about as many minutes to read. She adds that between the title sentence and the end, Narayan provides the reader something novelists

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struggle to achieve in hundreds more pages: a complete insight to the lives of his characters. These characteristics and abilities led Lahiri to classify him as belonging to the pantheon of short-story geniuses that include O. Henry, Frank O'Connor and Flannery O'Connor. Lahiri also compares him to Guy de Maupassant for their ability to compress the narrative without losing the story, and the common themes of middle-class life written with an unyielding and unpitiful vision.

Critics have noted that Narayan's writings tend to be more descriptive and less analytical; the objective style, rooted in a detached spirit, providing for a more authentic and realistic narration.[80] His attitude, coupled with his perception of life, provided a unique ability to fuse characters and actions,[81] and an ability to use ordinary events to create a connection in the mind of the reader.[82] A significant contributor to his writing style was his creation of Malgudi, a stereotypical small town, where the standard norms of superstition and tradition apply.

Narayan's writing style has often been compared to that of William Faulkner since both their works brought out the humour and energy of ordinary life while displaying compassionate humanism. The similarities also extended to their juxtaposing of the demands of society against the confusions of individuality. Although their approach to subjects was similar, their methods were different; Faulkner was rhetorical and illustrated his points with immense prose while Narayan was very simple and realistic, capturing the elements all the same. This element of realism is absolutely evident in 'Gateman's Gift'.

10.7 LET US SUM UP

The story leaves the readers with questions like why Singh had the fear of opening the letter just because it was a 'registered' letter, why he stopped clay modelling even after getting rewarded for his past creations. To answer such questions, we may say that Singh remained merely the football of others' opinions. Singh seemed to be lacking faith in his ability. He became the victim of negative thinking that generated fear in him, which was absolutely without any reason. He could have been self-confident and had faith in what he did. He is responsible for all his suffering. Fear when beyond a limit, thus, kills our strength.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: 1

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN BRIEF.

1. Why did Singh not open the letter?
2. Discuss major themes of the story.
3. What is the end of the story?

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: 2

CHOOSE APPROPRIATE OPTION FROM GIVEN BELOW.

1. Singh worked as a _____.
(a) clerk (b) accountant
(c) gateman (d) officer

2. After Singh retired, he developed his hobby of _____.
(a) clay modelling (b) painting
(c) music (d) writing
3. For Singh, the Chief Manager was like _____.
(a) father (b) brother
(c) God (d) king
4. Who opened Singh's letter finally?
(a) his wife (b) the accountant
(c) the policeman (d) his neighbour
5. _____ is the main theme of the story.
(a) Fear (b) Respect
(c) Ego (d) Doubt

10.8 KEY WORDS

1. Gateman: Gatekeeper, Watchman
2. Clay: The mineral substance made up of small crystals of silica and alumina
3. Convention: A Practice or Procedure widely observed in a group
4. Inclination: A Mental Tendency
5. Spruce: An Evergreen Tree, Wood of Spruce(the tree)

10.9 BOOKS SUGGESTED

1. *Malgudi Days* -R.K.Narayan
2. *The Very Best of R.K.Narayan: Timeless Malgudi* -R.K.Narayan
3. *A History of Indian English Literature* -M.K.Naik

ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

Ans.1 Singh doesn't open the letter because it is a 'registered' letter which means it is sent by the Manager and Singh thinks the Manager is not happy with his gifts and the letter is to inform Singh that his pension would be stopped now. A registered letters generates fear in him, which doesn't allow him to open the letter.

Ans.2 The main theme that is very obvious in the story is the theme of fear. All that happens to Singh after received the registered letter is the result of his fear. He is unnecessarily afraid of something, which is not the fact. Without knowing what is the letter sent for Singh almost becomes mad. Second major theme can be Pride. Singh is proud of his creation that he can't tolerate its rejection by anyone. He expects appreciation. He just is not able to understand at first why the registered letter was sent to him, because he is afraid of rejection of his gift or a similar thing. Thus, Pride and Fear can be considered major themes.

Ans.3 In the end of the story, Narayan reveals the truth. The letter is opened by the accountant and it turns out to be what Singh had not even dreamt. It's from the Manager expressing gratitude and admiration for the gift of Singh. Manager is

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happy with the clay models and wishes Singh progress more in this field of his interest. But Singh's fear has made him so mad that he no longer wants to touch clay modelling work. He decides to discontinue with his creative work.

Check Your Progress2

1. (c)
2. (a)
3. (c)
4. (b)
5. (a)