

Q. Why is it necessary for a hunter to know how to climb trees as seen in “Kunwar Singh”?

ANS: When Jim Corbett was given his first gun, his friend, Kunwar Singh was the first person to congratulate him. He told him that he was no longer a boy but was a man who could hunt as a man as much as he wanted to; he also told Corbett to learn how to climb trees as it was an important thing for a hunter. Then Kunwar narrated an incident to show the importance of knowing how to climb trees from his experience.

Kunwar told Corbett that he once went hunting with one friend named Har Singh. When a fox crossed their path which was believed to be a sign of bad luck, Kunwar suggested going back but Har Singh just laughed it off as childish and they went on their way. And sure enough, they did not manage to shoot anything and finally started home. As they were walking along a nullah, they met a tiger twice who left them without doing anything to them. But not wanting to go home empty – handed, Har Singh shot some birds which made the tiger run out of the bushes and charging towards them. They both ran and Kunwar climbed into a tree out of the tiger’s reach; since Har Singh had not learnt how to climb trees as a child, he did not know what to do but stood near a tree trying to grasp a branch. The tiger reached him, pinned him to the tree roaring and clawing the tree while Har Singh screamed. Kunwar then shot his rifle into the air which made the tiger run away. When Kunwar climbed down the tree after awhile, he discovered that the tiger had torn Har Singh’s flesh from his navel and almost to his backbone so that the mass of his insides had fallen off. Not knowing what to do, Kunwar just pushed back all of it and tied the wound tightly with his pugree. They slowly walked to Kaladhungi where fortunately, a doctor stitched up the wound for free.

Through this narration of his hunting experience, Kunwar told Corbett that if Har Singh had been given an advice as a boy to learn how to climb trees, he would not have suffered so much. Thus through the story, Kunwar taught Jim Corbett how important it is for a hunter to learn how to climb trees while hunting in the forest.

Q. Describe the importance of friendship from the story, “ Kunwar Singh.”

ANS: In the story, “ Kunwar Singh,” an extract from Jim Corbett’s “ My India,” the importance of friendship and its value can be seen clearly in the relationship between Corbett and Kunwar Singh.

Jim Corbett saw a British hunter who grew up in Kaladhungi and Nainital, India. One of his best friends was Kunwar Singh, the head – man of Chandni Chawk and a great hunter. When Corbett received his first gun at the age of eight, his friend Kunwar was the first one to congratulate him. At the same time, Kunwar taught a very valuable advice which was the need to learn how to climb trees, something that every good hunter must know. And he also taught Corbett how to make mental maps of the jungle so that he would never get lost. And when he hunted alone and shot animals, Corbett would always ask Kunwar’s help in retrieving his bag from the jungle which the latter never failed to do. All these helped Corbett as a young boy and as a hunter all his life.

When Kunwar Singh fell prey to the curse of the foothills and got addicted to opium, Corbett often advised him to give it up which did not have much effect but which finally led to Kunwar becoming a weak and frail man, dying of malaria. Fortunately for him, while he was gravely ill and put in his servant's hut, made to lay on a mud floor, His friend Corbett arrived. Corbett stopped all the rituals that were being performed, chased out the priest and all the people from the hut and then put his friend on a bed letting in fresh air into the room. He then gave milk to Kunwar and carefully instructed the eldest son to look after him properly. When he returned the next morning, Corbett found his friend sleeping peacefully. He made Kunwar make an oath that he would not touch the cursed opium ever again. Heeding the advice, Kunwar, though not as strong was able to visit Corbett whenever he visited the place and died peacefully four years later.

These instances of two friends giving one another good advice when needed clearly showed the importance of friendship, which benefitted both.