

Chapter 7 Packing

THINK ABOUT THE TEXT

I. Discuss in pairs and answer each question below in a short paragraph (30-40 words).

1. How many characters are there in the narrative? Name them. (do not forget dog)
A. There are four characters in the story, viz. Jerome, George, Harris and the dog.
2. Why did the narrator (Jerome) volunteer to do the packing?
A. Narrator was of the opinion that he was the best at packing.
3. How did George and Harris react to this? Did Jerome like their reaction?
A. George and Harris agreed to Jerome, because they wanted to loaf around while Jerome would do the packing.
4. What was Jerome's real intention when he offered to pack?
A. Jerome's real intention was to show off his talent at packing the things.

5. What did Harris say after the bag was shut and strapped? Why do you think he waited till then to ask?
A. After the bag was shut and strapped Harris asked if Jerome forgot to pack the boot. He wanted to enjoy the irritation on Jerome's face so he waited till last.
6. What "horrible idea" occurred to Jerome a little later?
A. Jerome was not sure if he packed his toothbrush or not. In the past also Jerome has similar mishaps with packing or unpacking of toothbrush.
7. Where did Jerome finally find the toothbrush?
A. After searching through everything Jerome found the toothbrush inside a boot.
8. What did George and Harris offer to pack and why?
A. George and Harris offered to pack the bag which would contain edible items. They also wanted to show off their packing skills.
9. While packing the hamper, George and Harris do a number of foolish and funny things. Tick the statements that are true.

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| (i) They started with breaking a cup. | ✓ |
| (ii) They also broke a plate. | ✓ |
| (iii) They squashed a tomato. | ✓ |
| (iv) They trod on the butter. | ✓ |
| (v) They stepped on a banana. | |
| (vi) They put things behind them, and couldn't find them. | ✓ |
| (vii) They stepped on things. | ✓ |
| (viii) They packed the pictures at the bottom and put heavy things on top. | |
| (ix) They upset almost everything. | ✓ |

(x) They were very good at packing.

II. What does Jerome say was Montmorency's ambition in life? What do you think of Montmorency and why?

A. Montmorency's ambition in life was to disturb people and be sworn at in the bargain. It always made a mess of everything the way most of the pet dogs do while in a playful mood.

III. Discuss in groups and answer the following questions in two or three paragraphs (100-150 words)

1. Of the three, Jerome, George and Harris, who do you think is the best or worst packer? Support your answer with details from the text.

A. In spite of forgetting certain things to pack or getting confused about some things, Jerome seems to be the best packer. He packs things the way they should be. He knows what to keep first and what to keep last. He doesn't create a mess all around.

It is difficult to select the worst packer from Harris and George. Harris smashes tomato while packing the bottle of jam over it. George treads on butter and creates a mess all around. Then he tries to put it in the kettle. After this Harris sits on the butter kept on the chair. After the butter sticks to Harris' behind both of them start searching for it. They put lighter things at the bottom and heavier things at the top. This is like putting potatoes on top of tomatoes while shopping for vegetables. Both George and Harris are equally horrendous in packing.

2. How did Montmorency 'contribute' to the packing?

A. The packing escapade was already a messy job and Montmorency's contribution to it made it even more tiresome. He did his level best to be a "perfect nuisance".

He came and sat down on things, just when they were wanted to be packed. He put his leg into the jam and worried the teaspoons. He also pretended that the lemons were rats. So he got into the hamper and killed three of them before Harris could land him with the frying-pan.

3. Do you find this story funny? What are the humorous elements in it? (Pick out at least three, think about what happens, as well as how it is described.)

A. Yes, this story is definitely funny. Not only is the way in which the three friends pack for their trip quite mirthfully, but the way the author narrates all the incidents is also entertaining.

The first humorous element is that he offered to pack, George and Harris leave the whole matter to him. Consequently, he has to do packing though his real intention was to boss the job.

The second humorous element is that George placed the butter on the chair and Harris sat on it and it stuck at his back. When they searched it for packing it was missing. They walked and walked round the room. At last, George saw it at Harris's back.

The third humorous element is that Montmorency squirms in where he is not wanted. He wants somebody stumble over him and curse him steadily for an hour. He pretends that lemons were rats.