

Gopal and the Hilsa - fish

1. Why did the King want no more talk about the Hilsa-fish ?

The king did not want any more talk about the hilsa-fish because it was the season for hilsa-fish and no one could stop talking about it for even five minutes. He was getting annoyed with all the talk about hilsa-fish.

2. What did the King ask Gopal to do to prove that he was clever ?

In order to prove that he was clever, Gopal was asked to buy a huge hilsa-fish and bring it to the palace without anyone asking anything about the fish.

3. What three things did Gopal do before he went to buy his Hilsa-fish?

Before he went to buy hilsa-fish, Gopal half-shaved his face, smeared himself with ash, and wore disgraceful rags.

4. How did Gopal get inside the palace to see the King after he had bought the fish?

After he had bought the fish, Gopal reached the palace and told the guards that he wanted to see the king. When the guards did not let him in, he began to dance and sing loudly. When the king heard this, and also the comments of the people watching the man sing and dance, he asked for the man to be brought before him.

5. Explain why no one seemed to be interested in talking about the Hilsa-fish which Gopal had bought.

No one seemed to be interested in talking about the hilsa-fish which Gopal had bought because of his appearance. Some people found him comical, others thought he was a madman, still others thought he was a mystic. They were so engrossed in discussing his appearance that the hilsa-fish went unnoticed.

6. Write 'True' or 'False' against each of the following sentences

- i. The king lost his temper easily. - True
- ii. Gopal was a mad man. - False
- iii. Gopal was a clever man. - True
- iv. Gopal was too poor to afford decent clothes. - False
- v. The King got angry when he was shown to be wrong. - False.

Change the following sentences in the story to reported speech. The first one has been done for you.

i. How much did you pay for that hilsa ?

The woman asked the man how much he had paid for that hilsa.

ii. Why is your face half-shaven?

Gopal's wife asked him why his face was half-shaven.

iii. I accept the challenge, Your Majesty.

Gopal told the king that he accepted the challenge.

iv. I want to see the king.

Gopal told the guards that he wanted to see the King.

v. Bring the man to me at once.

The king ordered the guard to bring the man to him at once.

