

PROSE UNIT 1

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

- A. J. Cronin

PUBLIC EXAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Answer the following questions in one or two sentences each based on your understanding of the story.

- a. **Why did the driver not approve of the narrator buying fruits from the boys?** (August 2021)
The driver did not approve of the narrator buying fruits from the boys because of their **shabby appearance**.
- b. **The boys did not spend much on clothes and food. Why?** (FRT & July-'22)
The boys did not spend much on clothes and food because they had to save the money for **their sister's treatment expenses**.
- c. **Why did the author avoid going to Lucia's room?** (QY-'19)
The author did not like to disturb the **happy family party**. So he avoided going to Lucia's room.
- d. **What made the boys join the resistance movement against the Germans?** (PTA-3)
The Germans killed the boy's father and made them homeless. This made the boys join the **resistance movement**.
- e. **Describe the appearance of Nicola and Jacopo.** (PTA-1 & 6; Sep. 2020; FRT-'22)
Nicola and Jacopa had a **shabby appearance**. One had **worn jersey** and **cut-off khaki pants**. The other had **shortened army tunic gathered in loose folds**. They had brown skins, tangled hair and dark earnest eyes.
- f. **What were the various jobs undertaken by the little boys?** (Govt. MQP; March 2020; May-2022)
Selling fruits, shining shoes, hawking newspapers, conducting tourists round the town and running errands were the various jobs undertaken by the little boys.
- g. **How did the narrator help the boys on Sunday?** (HY-'19; FRT-'22)
The narrator helped the boys on Sunday by taking them to **'Poleta'** in his car driving himself.

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONSS

Answer the following in a paragraph of 100-150 words each.

- a. **What was the driving force that made the boys do various jobs?** (FRT-'22)
The boys lost their mother in their early life. Their father, a well known singer became a victim of the early war against Germany. They became homeless and suffered starvation and cold winter. They led a **pathetic life**. After the war, they found their sister. They could not feel happy because she was suffering from **tuberculosis of the spine**. The boys were the only family for their sister. They felt that it was their duty to make arrangements for her medical treatment. They were not rich enough to spend for medical expenses but they had the **optimistic view** to save their sister in one way or the other. This was the driving force that made the boys do various jobs.

b. Write a character sketch of Nicola and Jacopo.

(PTA-4)

Nicola and Jacopo were two brothers who were 13 and 12 years respectively. They belonged to the city of **Verona in Italy**. They were childish and innocent. Nicola was steady and engaging. They were engaged in different works to earn money which shows that they were hard working. The narrator was impressed by their willingness to work. Indeed, the war had not broken their spirit. Their selfless action brought a new **nobility** to human life. Their **positive attitude** gave promise of a greater hope for human society.

c. What message is conveyed through the story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona'?

(HY-'19; July-'22)

The story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona' **promises hope** for the society. The boys Nicola and Jacopo were **devoted** and sincere towards the cause of their sister's **ailment**. They were self-sacrificing, despite the harshness faced by them. This **approach** of theirs towards life shows **positivity** and nobility. Despite all the **negativity** in the world like **war, hatred, jealousy, rivalry** and **selfishness**, the boys' attitude indicated that goodness still persisted in some souls. It conveys the message that there is scope for the world, for all of us, to become a better place one day.

d. Justify the title of the story 'Two Gentlemen of Verona'.

(Govt. MQP; PTA-2; QY-'19; FRT & May-'22)

A.J. Cronin had used the title 'Two Gentlemen of Verona' in an **ironic manner**. At a very young age, the boys faced the **hardships** of life - their mother died early in their life, their father became a **victim** of the early war, their village suffered due to German occupation, their home got destroyed, suffered starvation and cold winter. The family **struggled** for life. They found their sister suffering from Tuberculosis of the spine. It was another shock to those poor kids. Despite facing so many problems in their early childhood, they did not lose hope. Their positive approach and determination enabled them to give their sister, the best they could. They did various jobs, but lived a **poor life** to save money for their sister's treatment and food. They never tried to seek anyone's **sympathy**. Hence these two young boys have every quality of being called 'The Gentlemen of Verona'.

e. Adversity brings out the best as well as the worst in people. Elucidate this statement with reference to the story.

(August 2021)

When man suffers from **hardship** and **difficulty** the best or the worst of his will be brought out. Some will try to overcome the adversity with negative elements like **anti-social dealings** and others will use the positive energy to overcome the **adversity**. The best or the worst comes out due to the pressure of adversity. In this story, the two boys use their best to overcome their problems. Nevertheless, the main idea of the author is to underline the virtues that make a man a real man. The story captures the sentiment that true **humanity** is not about letting go, and it is about **courage** and **determination**. They lost everything in their life except hope. The hope pushes them to use their positive energy. So this story is an example to prove that adversity brings out the best in people.

f. Which character do you like the most in the story and why?

I like the characters of the two boys, 'Nicolo and Jacopo' the most, as they were devoted, sincere and **self-sacrificing**, despite the **harshness** faced by them. Although the boys were childish, simple and natural, there was a **grave seriousness** on their faces. This was indicative of the rude and harsh life, which they had faced at such an early age. As they had lost their parents and home, and their sister was battling an ailment, the young boys were serious towards life. They had lost their childhood. Despite all the negativity in the world like war, hatred, **jealousy, rivalry** and selfishness, the boys' attitude indicated that **goodness** still persisted in some souls. It also conveys to us that there is scope for the world to become a better place one day.

