

Question 1: What 'experiment' did Maxwell think Camusfearna would be suitable for?

Answer: After visiting Southern Iraq in 1956, Maxwell became intrigued by the thought of owning an otter rather than a dog. He believed that Camusfearna was surrounded by water and that its entrance was just outside. Therefore, it would be an excellent location for this "experiment."

Question 2: Why does he go to Basra? How long does he wait there, and why?

Answer: Maxwell went to the General Consulate in Basra to retrieve and respond to his letters from Europe. His mail had not yet arrived, despite the fact that his friend's had. He sent a cable to England as a result, and three days later, he even made a reservation-only phone call. The exchange was closed for a religious holiday on the second day, while the line was inoperable on the first. Another breakdown occurred on the third day. After his friend left, the writer made plans to see him in a week. After five days, his mail finally came. Maxwell consequently had to wait five days for his mail.

Question 3: How does he get the otter? Does he like it? Pick out the words that tell you this.

Answer: As soon as his mail arrived, the author went to his bedroom to read it. He noticed two Arabs kneeling on the ground and carrying a bag that squirmed intermittently. They gave him a note stating that it was from him and that his friend had sent him an otter.

Maxwell did seem to appreciate it. This is clear from the fact that he referred to his feelings for the otter as "An otter fixation." Like any other otter owner, he thought the phrase was intended to express his deep love for otters.

Question 4: Why was the otter named 'Maxwell's otter'?

Answer: Maxwell's otter was the common name for an otter used by zoologists, "Lutrogale Perspicillata Maxwelli".

Question 5: Tick the right answer. In the beginning, the otter was

- aloof and indifferent
- friendly
- hostile

Answer: In the beginning, the otter was aloof and indifferent.

Question 6: What happened when Maxwell took Mijbil to the bathroom? What did it do two days after that?

Answer: The otter initially went crazy in the water for the first half hour when Maxwell first took Mijbil to the restroom. His actions caused enough slosh and splash for a hippo as he dove and rolled in it, blasting up and down the length of the bathtub.

After a couple of days, the otter abruptly left Maxwell's room and went to the bathroom to play in the water. There, he was perched on the end of the bathtub and pawing at the chrome faucets. The author marvelled as the tiny creature slowly turned the water faucet to produce a trickle before achieving full flow after a short while.

Oral Comprehension Check (Page 108-109)**Question 1: How was Mij to be transported to England?**

Answer: Maxwell scheduled a journey to Paris, where he would next travel to England. The airline officials asked that Mijbil be put into an 18-inch square box and placed near Maxwell's feet because dogs are not permitted on British flights. As a result, he had a box created an hour before they began and placed Mij inside of it so that he could become used to it. Then he hurried to fetch a dinner.

Question 2: What did Mij do to the box?

Answer: Although the box was lined with a metal sheet, Mij tried to get out of it because she didn't feel at ease there. Mijbil tore into the box's metal lining in an effort to escape, hurt himself, and began bleeding.

Question 3: Why did Maxwell put the otter back in the box? How do you think he felt when he did this?

Answer: Maxwell placed the otter back inside the box because he was aware that there was no other way he could transport Mij to London. He was concerned and moved by the otter's suffering after injuring himself trying to escape the box.

Question 4: Why does Maxwell say the airhostess was “the very queen of her kind”?

Answer: After hearing Maxwell's tale, the air hostess was incredibly cordial and sympathetic. She acknowledged his sentiments and worries regarding the box event, and she gave him permission to remove the otter from the box and keep it on his knee. After hearing this, the author grew very fond of the gracious woman and referred to her as "the very queen of her kind."

Question 5: What happened when the box was opened?

Answer: Mij leaped out of the box as soon as it was opened. He quickly vanished and raced all over the place, frightening other travellers on the aircraft. The otter caused a lot of havoc on the plane, and the other passengers became alarmed upon seeing the tiny animal. As he passed beneath the legs of a large white-turbaned Indian, a woman on the seat rose from her seat out of fright. Mij escaped Maxwell's grasp despite his best efforts. The flight attendant promised Maxwell she would locate the otter for him. Mijbil soon found him again, clinging to his knee and nuzzling his face and neck.

Oral Comprehension Check (Page 110)**Question 1: What game had Mij invented?**

Answer: Ping-pong ball play is a game that Mij created. The lid of one of the author's luggage sloped and was damaged. Mij would place the ball at the top of the sloped lid and sprint to catch it as it descended toward the bottom.

Question 2: What are 'compulsive habits'? What does Maxwell say are the compulsive habits of

(i) school children

(ii) Mij?

Answer: Compulsive behaviors are typically described as odd behaviors that a person repeats repeatedly without apparent cause. For instance, a child might choose to leap a fence rather than use the usual route. Children typically exhibit obsessive behaviour because they are naturally naughty.

(i) According to the narrative, Maxwell expresses compulsive behaviours such as children's rituals of touching every seventh iron railing upright, passing to the outside of every second lamp post or placing their feet squarely in the middle of every paving block on their way to and from school.

(ii) In a similar vein, Mijbil would gallop the entire thirty yards of the boundary wall while returning home, distracting both of them hopelessly.

Question 3: What group of animals do otters belong to?

Answer: Otters are a member of the Mustellines, a relatively small group of animals. These group's other members include badgers, mongooses, weasels, stoats, mink, and others.

Question 4: What guesses did the Londoners make about what Mij was?

Answer: Maxwell claims that because otters are not common in England, Londoners have a difficult time identifying them. They therefore made the most absurd assumptions about Mijbil. A baby seal, a squirrel, a walrus, a beaver, a bear cub, a leopard, a hippo, and even a brontosaurus were among the suggestions made by some.

Thinking about the Text (Page 110-111)

Question 1: What things does Mij do which tell you that he is an intelligent, friendly and fun-loving animal who needs love?

Answer: Mij demonstrated his brilliance by creating his own version of ping-pong on a Maxwell suitcase that had seen better days. Another example of his intellect was when he entered the bathtub and played with the water after turning on the faucet in the bathroom. Although he was originally distant and uninterested in Maxwell, he gradually began to show signs of friendliness towards his owner. This is clear from the fact that during the flight, he clutched to Maxwell's feet. He eventually formed a close bond with the author and showed himself to be a playful animal by coming up with his own games and displaying some compulsive behaviours while walking with Maxwell through the streets of London.

Question 2: What are some of the things we come to know about otters from this text?

Answer: Otters are a member of the Mustellines, a very small group of animals that also includes badger, mongoose, weasel, stoat, mink, and others. Large populations of them are typically found in marshy locations. As pets, Arabs domesticate them. Otters enjoy making splashes and playing in the water. The *Lutrogale Perspicillata Maxwelli*, also known as Maxwell's otter, is the scientific name for the previously unnamed race of Maxwell's otter. We also learned that otters are clever, entertaining creatures that create and enjoy playing their own games and are sociable around people.

Question 3: Why is Mij's species now known to the world as Maxwell's otter?

Answer: The *Lutrogale Perspicillata Maxwelli*, also known as Maxwell's otter, is the scientific name for the previously unnamed race of Maxwell's otter.

Question 4: Maxwell in the story speaks for the otter, Mij. He tells us what the otter feels and thinks on different occasions. Given below are some things the otter does. Complete the column on the right to say what Maxwell says about what Mij feels and thinks.

What Mij does	How Mij feels or thinks
Plunges, rolls in the water and makes the water splosh and splash	
Screws the tap in the wrong way	
Nuzzles Maxwell's face and neck in the aeroplane	

Answer:

What Mij does	How Mij feels or thinks
plunges, rolls in the water and makes the water splosh and splash	Went wild with joy
Screws the tap in the wrong way	Irritated and disappointed at the tap's failure to cooperate
Nuzzles Maxwell's face and neck in the aeroplane	A distressed chitter of recognition and welcome

Question 5: Read the story and find the sentences where Maxwell describes his pet otter. Then choose and arrange your sentences to illustrate those statements below that you think are true.

Maxwell's description

- (i) makes Mij seem almost human, like a small boy.
- (ii) shows that he is often irritated with what Mij does.
- (iii) shows that he is often surprised by what Mij does.
- (iv) of Mij's antics is comical.
- (v) shows that he observes the antics of Mij very carefully.
- (vi) shows that he thinks Mij is a very ordinary otter.
- (vii) shows that he thinks the otter is very unusual.

Answer:

1. True. The statement – “He spent most of his time in play.”
2. False
3. True. The statement – “I watched, amazed; in less than a minute he had turned the tap far enough to produce a trickle of water, and after a moment or two achieved the full flow.”

4. True. The statement – “Marbles were Mij’s favourite toys for this pastime: he would lie on his back rolling two or more of them up and down his wide, flat belly without ever dropping one to the floor.
5. True. The statement – “A suitcase that I had taken to Iraq had become damaged on the journey home, so that the lid, when closed, remained at a slope from one end to the other. Mij discovered that if he placed the ball on the high end it would run down the length of the suitcase. He would dash around to the other end to ambush its arrival, hide from it, crouching, to spring up and take it by surprise, grab it and trot off with it to the high end once more.”
6. False
7. True. The statement – “It is not, I suppose, in any way strange that the average Londoner should not recognize an otter, but the variety of guesses as to what kind of animal this might come as a surprise to me.”