INDIAN SCHOOL NIZWA - WORKSHEET

ENGLISH
EVANS TRIES AN O-LEVEL
SUMMARY

Name: _____ Date:_____ Class: XII Sec: ___

An unusual request from a prisoner

In early March, the Secretary of the Examinations Board gets a call from the Governor of HM Prison in Oxford. The call is regarding a prisoner at Oxford Prison. The prisoner, James Roderick Evans, has been taking night classes in O-level German since last September and now aspires to write the exam to add to his education qualification.

The Governor informs the Secretary that Evans is a congenital kleptomaniac but has a pleasant personality and no record of violence. As Evans is in a cell of his own, he can sit for his exam there itself. The call ends with the decision to get a parson from St. Mary Mags to invigilate and to keep the prisoner incommunicado during the exam.

'Evans the Break' – a bonafide test taker?

Evans has escaped from the prison thrice before he came to Oxford Prison. For this reason, the prison officers call him 'Evans the Break'. Thinking that Evans may have a genuine interest in O-level German, the Governor wants to give him a chance. But he doesn't want Evans to disgrace him by escaping his premises and so he gets involved in the security arrangements himself.

No stone left unturned

Evans is placed in the heavily guarded Recreational Block, just across D wing. There are two locked doors between his cell and the yard which boasts of a high wall. Moreover, all the prison officers are also on the alert. The Governor gets a microphone installed in Evans' cell while Stephens keeps a hawk's eye on Evans.

Two prison officers, Mr. Jackson and Mr. Stephens, thoroughly check his cell for any sign of a possible escape. Even his razor, nail-file and nail scissors have been taken away. But hitting on a tiny emotional cord hidden in the stern looking Jackson, Evans manages to retain his filthy bobble hat by claiming it to be his "lucky charm."

The invigilator, Reverend Stuart McLeery, sifted

Considering the possibility of Evans exploiting any potential weapon brought unwittingly by his invigilator, the Governor gets the parson searched thoroughly. Even McLeery's paper-knife was not allowed. This frisking process causes a little delay. And, the two hour exam scheduled for 9:15 a.m. begins at 9:25 a.m.

Telephone calls during the examination

Within fifteen minutes of the start of the examination, the Governor receives a call from the Examination Board for a spelling correction in the question paper. This puts the jail officials in suspicion. The Governor tries unsuccessfully to cross-check the authenticity of the call. Thus, the necessary changes were made in the question paper without validation.

The phone rings again. The Magistrates' Court needed a prison van and a couple of prison officers for a remand case. The Governor wonders if it is a hoax but shakes off the idea.

Throughout the examination, Stephens closely supervises the cell by peering through the peep-hole at frequent intervals. After some time, complaining of the cold inside the cell, Evans gets himself covered with a blanket. Though skeptic, Stephens doesn't report the matter to Jackson.

Three minutes before the end of examination, he receives the Governor's call asking him to escort McLeery to the prison gates and to personally ensure that the door is locked on Evans. Finally, at 11:25 a.m., the exam is over and Evans is asked to submit his sheets.

Evans' fourth escape from prison

Evans absconds in McLeery's disguise as Stephens fails to notice the visible changes in the accent and body size of McLeery whom he escorted to the prison gates. On returning, Stephen is taken aback with shock as he finds a profusely bleeding McLeery in Evans' chair. Jackson and Stephen help McLeery get up and call the ambulance, but McLeery, claiming to know Evans' whereabouts, requests to see the Governor.

Soon the prison premises change into a pandemonium of bells, sirens, officers barking orders, banging and bolting of doors and ringing of phones. The wounded McLeery shows a photocopied sheet, cleverly superimposed over the last page of the question paper, containing hints about Evans' whereabouts.

The injured parson helps police

The injured McLeery leaves with Mr. Carter, the detective Superintendent, and suggests they drive to Elsfield Way. The Governor gets furious at Jackson for not scrutinising Evans's cell properly the previous evening; for, Evans has clearly managed to hide a false beard, pair of spectacles and other things needed for his plan.

Evans plan starts unraveling

While the jail officials are still teasing their brains to break the code of Newbury, the Governor gets to know that it was not McLeery who was taken to the hospital by Carter but Evans, disguised as McLeery, who flees from Elsfield Way on the pretext of taking an ambulance. Now, the Governor recognises the actual plan of escape. Everything including the fake parson, the question paper, the correction slip and the phone calls during the examination has been part of Evans' plan. Yet, the Governor could not help appreciating Evans' cleverly laid plan.

A quarter of an hour later they found the Reverend S. McLeery, securely bound and gagged, in his study in Broad Street. He'd been there, he said, since 8.15 a.m.

The hideaway and the catch

Meanwhile, Evans reaches the Golden Lion Hotel in Chipping Norton. He recalls how his 'good and clever friends' helped him escape from prison and later from Elsfield Way. The fake McLeery entered the prison wearing two black fronts and two collars. Everything, from keeping a pen in his mouth to covering himself with a blanket, has been part of the plan.
However, to Evans' dismay, the Governor tracks him down to his room with the help of the little German he knew and the 'correction slip'.

The whole conspiracy revealed

Admitting his defeat, Evans reveals the whole conspiracy. The call for the 'correction' was made to let him know the name of the hotel he had to go to, as well as to let his co-conspirators know the time the examination was to end. The index number and centre number referred to the location of the hotel. Finally, to show bleeding, pig's blood concealed in the rubber ring was used. Even his German teacher was part of the plan.

Evans has the last laugh

The Governor gets Evans rearrested. However, as the police van leaves with a handcuffed Evans accompanied by two police officers, another plot is revealed. The prison van and the officer are part of another escape plan, concocted by his friends. Thus, "Evans the Break" finally absconds to Newbury.