

## Comprehension 1

A poor student rented a room over a tempura (a kind of Japanese food) shop. The student was a most likeable young man, but the shopkeeper was a miser who suspected everyone of trying to get the better of him. One day he heard the student talking with one of his friends.

5            “It is said that one is truly poor when one can only afford to eat plain rice,” the friend complained.

              “ Oh,” said the student. “I have found a very satisfactory answer to the problem. I eat my rice each day while the shopkeeper downstairs fries his fish. The smell comes up, and my humble rice seems to have much more flavour. It is really the smell, you know, that  
10 makes things taste so good.”

              When he heard this, the shopkeeper was furious. To think that someone was enjoying the smell of his fish for nothing! “Thief!” he shouted. “I demand that you pay me for the smells you have stolen.”

              “A smell is a smell,” the young man replied. “Anyone can smell what he wants to. I  
15 will pay you nothing!”

              Scarlet with rage, the shopkeeper rushed to the court and charged the student with theft.

              Gravely the judge sat on the dais and heard that case. Then he delivered his verdict.

              “The student is obviously guilty,” he said severely. “Taking another person’s  
20 property is theft, and I can’t see that a smell is different from any other property.” So, the judge ordered the student to pay for the smell. He asked the student to drop the coins from one hand to the other.

              The judge listened to the pleasant clink of the money and said to the shopkeeper,  
“You have been paid. If you have any other complaints in the future, please bring them to  
25 the court. It is our wish that all injustices be punished and all virtue rewarded.”

              The shopkeeper was surprised. He protested, “I didn’t get the money! I only heard the clink of the coins.”

              The judge looked at him gravely. “It is the court’s judgement that punishment should fit the crime. I have decided that the price of the smell of food shall be the sound of the  
30 money. Justice has prevailed as usual in my court.”

**Read the passage carefully and answer the questions in complete sentences.**

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1. What kind of person was the shopkeeper?

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2. What kind of rice did the student eat every day?

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3. What did the student do in order to add more flavour to his rice?

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4. Why did the shopkeeper charge the student with theft?

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5. What was the punishment given by the judge to the student?

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6. What did the shopkeeper actually get?

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7. What exactly did the judge order the student to do?

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8. In line 25, it says “.....all injustice be punished and all virtue rewarded.” What was the real “injustice” in the passage?

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9. Was the shopkeeper satisfied with what he got from the student?

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10. How would you describe the judge in the passage?

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