1. Compare Darzee and Darzee’s wife in the story—which one has more sense?

2. How similar to a human hero is Rikki-tikki? What heroic characteristics does he have?

3. Was it justified for Rikki to destroy the cobras’ nest or kill Nagaina? Why/why not?

4. Why do you think the author chose to use cobras and a mongoose as opposed to any other pair of natural predators?

5. What deeper meaning does the character Chuchundra have in the story? What, in other words, is his role in the text?

6. Using quotes such as when “Rikki-tikki felt his eyes growing red and hot”, how could you argue that Rikki is presented in a way that makes the reader think he has anger issues?

7. Does Nagaina deserve sympathy? Explain why/why not.

8. What are the tailorbirds motivated by? Give textual detail.

9. Do you think the snakes purposely let Rikki hear “the dry scratch of [their] scales on brick-work”? Why/why not?

10. How would you describe Rikki’s experience of being adopted? Provide textual details.

11. Other than the humans rescuing him, how else do they help Rikki? Or is it more of a one-sided relationship?

12. The narrator mentions how Rikki “made sure he would be banged to death, and, for the honour of his family, he preferred to be found with his teeth locked.” What does this show about Rikki?

13. Why do you think Rikki was so drawn to Teddy when he first saw him? Why did he want to hang out with him so much?

14. What do you think that the theme of the story is? Why? Provide textual detail and explanation.

15. In what ways does the author enforce the gender roles and stereotypes of the time in both the humans and the animals?

16. The narrator of “Rikki-tikki-tavi”concludes the telling of the story with the following claim: “Rikki-tikki had a right to be proud of himself; but he did not grow too proud…” (134). Do you agree with this or disagree? Why? Provide textual evidence and explanation.