1. What is the theme of the lesson ‘The letter’ written by Dhumaketu?

Ans: Love is the foundation of the entire universe and the desire to love and be loved is intrinsic in the nature of Man. The relationship of a parent and child forms the core-centre of the universe and no other relationship can equal it in intensity. Grief and separation from a child becomes very poignant and unbearable for a father and eternal wait for a child’s letter can prove to be real torture. Coachman Ali is a symbol of endless patience, perseverance and his unshaken faith in Miriam’s letter doesn’t end with his death. Moreover, a grieving father can only understand the trauma and suffering of another father. Pain and suffering bring people together even. In the last five years he never received any letter. So the post office people regarded him to be a mad man. Moreover, Ali appeared to be lost in his own world, without being bothered by any sarcastic remark or being deterred by unfavourable weather.

2. “Ali’s wait for his daughter’s letter extends beyond his grave.” Bring out the truth of this statement by referring to the lesson ‘The Letter.’

Ans: A parent’s entire life revolves around his child. A father is totally oblivious of his discomfort of suffering in looking after his child. A child forms the core-centre of its parents’ universe. Pain of separation from a child is intolerable for a father. Coachman Ali’s life had changed dramatically after his daughter Miriam left him, after getting married to a soldier. Ali was desperate to know of her welfare but for five long years he never received a reply. Sickness, ridicule, sarcasm, nothing seemed to affect him. Ali relentlessly visited the post office before dawn and came back only after night. His diehard optimism and unshaking faith in Miriam’s letter remained steadfast. The death of his physical body couldn’t stop this eternal quest. He promptly appears to receive Miriam’s letter, at the stroke of five. An unearthly light and tears on his face, made the postmaster shrink back in fear and amazement. Ali ceased to exist in his physical body but the yearnings of his indomitable spirit is satisfied. His infinite patience wins in the end, even though he is dead.

3. What is the theme of the lesson ‘The Letter’ written by Dhumaketu?

Ans: Love is the foundation of the entire universe and the desire to love and be loved is intrinsic in the nature of Man. The relationship of a parent and child forms the core-centre of the universe and no other relationship can equal it in intensity. Grief and separation from a child becomes very poignant and unbearable for a father and eternal wait for a child’s
letter can prove to be real torture. Coachman Ali is a symbol of endless patience, perseverance and his unshaken faith in Miriam’s letter doesn’t end with his death. Moreover, a grieving father can only understand the trauma and suffering of another father. Pain and suffering bring people together even if they are poles apart. So the author advocates the need for compassion, understanding, brotherhood, and empathy for the needy. Only this can sustain us in life.

4. **What is the role of ‘the letter’ in the story by ‘Dhumketu’?**

   **Ans :** Letter plays a very significant role in the story. The writer wants to depict that the letters are not just envelops and postcards, but they have great human worth. The main protagonist, Ali, visits post office every day in the hope of receiving a letter from his daughter who is married and lives with her husband. The people in the post office ignore him as a mad man. One day he visits the post office in bad health and gives money to one of the clerk to keep his daughter’s letter on his grave. Ali’s prediction proves true and he is not seen for sometime. By a strange turn of fate, the post master, who even called Ali a pest, finds himself in the similar situation as his daughter is not well, in another city, he anxiously waits for her letter. Now he realises the value of a child’s letter for a father. He chances upon Miriam’s letter and thinks of delivering the letter personally to Ali. He is shocked to learn that Ali has been dead for the past three months. The clerk recounts his last meeting with Ali. Both post master and the clerk visit Ali’s grave and place the letter on it. Thus the letter plays a significant role in the story by Dhumketu.

5. **“Ali’s wait for his daughter’s letter extends beyond his grave.” Bring out the truth of this statement by referring to the lesson ‘The Letter’.

   **Ans :** A parent’s entire life revolves around his child. A father is totally oblivious of his discomfort or suffering, in looking after his child. A child forms the core-centre of its parent’s universe. Pain of separation from a child is intolerable for a father. Coachman Ali’s life had changed dramatically after his daughter Miriam left him, after getting married to a soldier. Ali was desperate to know of her welfare but for five long years he never received a reply. Sickness, ridicule, sarcasm, nothing seemed to affect him. Ali relentlessly visited the post office before dawn and came back only after night. His diehard optimism, unshaking faith in Miriam’s letter remained steadfast. The death of his physical body couldn’t stop this eternal guest. He promptly appears to receive Miriam’s letter, at the stroke of five. An unearthly light and tears on his face, made the postmaster shrink back in fear and amazement. Ali ceased to exist in his physical body but the yearnings of his indomitable spirit is satisfied. His infinite patience wins in the end, even though he is dead.