# SmartKalike

CBSE Class 10 · English

## A Question of Trust

10 most probable questions for Boards 2027

**Q1. 2 marks · Short answer**

Why does Horace Danby rob a safe every year?

**Answer**

Horace loved rare, expensive books and robbed a safe each year to finance his collection. He planned each robbery carefully, stole enough to last twelve months, and secretly bought books through an agent.

**Q2. 5 marks · Long answer**

Why did Horace steal each year, and how did he use the proceeds? Explain how he left fingerprints while helping the young woman, and why he believed his thefts were justified.

**Answer**

Horace Danby stole from safes each year to satisfy his love of rare, expensive books.
1. He planned each robbery carefully and stole enough to last twelve months. He secretly bought the books he wanted through an agent.
2. At Shotover Grange, he expected to sell the jewels one by one and raise at least five thousand pounds. The money would also let him buy three books coming up for sale in autumn.
3. Horace removed his gloves to give the young woman his cigarette lighter. He then opened the safe bare-handed, leaving fingerprints throughout the room.
4. He believed his thefts were justified because he stole only from wealthy people and considered his reason good; he wanted books, not a life of crime.
His carelessness exposed him, and his excuse could not undo the robbery.

**Q3. 9 marks · Very long answer**

How does Horace's belief that he is a respectable man affect his decisions during the robbery? Explain how the young woman deceives him and how his own actions lead to his arrest.

**Answer**

Horace regards himself as respectable because he steals for books, not for a life of luxury, but this self-image blinds him to his wrongdoing.
1. He carefully studies Shotover Grange for two weeks and plans the robbery, believing that his intelligence and experience make the crime manageable.
2. When the woman catches him, he tries to persuade her that he is harmless. He claims he steals only from the wealthy and promises to stop, treating his personal reasons as an excuse.
3. The woman pretends to be the owner by speaking confidently, calling the dog Sherry, and behaving familiarly in the house. She says she needs the jewels for a party and has forgotten the safe's numbers.
4. Horace trusts her story because she appears calm and sympathetic, and because he wants to

escape prison. He removes his gloves to give her his lighter and opens the safe for her.
5. His bare fingerprints remain in the room, while the real owner denies knowing him. The police arrest Horace, and his claim that the woman asked for help is not believed.
Horace's vanity and compromised honesty make him easy to deceive and lead directly to his arrest.

**Q4. 12 marks · Essay answer**

In a detailed response, trace how the young woman makes Horace believe she is the lady of the house. Explain the clues that might have made him suspect the truth, where his judgement fails, and how the encounter turns one thief into the victim of another.

**Answer**

Horace Danby plans his robbery carefully. He studies Shotover Grange for two weeks, examining its rooms, electric wiring, paths and garden. He knows that the servants will be away at the movies and that the safe lies behind a painting. He wears gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints and expects to take jewels worth about fifteen thousand pounds, selling them to fund his love of rare books. His preparation makes him confident, but the confidence also makes him vulnerable when an unexpected visitor appears.

The young woman enters while Horace is in the drawing room. She is dressed in red and speaks in a quiet, kindly voice, yet with authority. The dog rubs against her, and she addresses it as Sherry, as though she belongs in the house. She tells the dog that anyone would think she had been away for a month, then says she returned just in time and did not expect to meet a burglar. Her familiar manner, ease around the dog and confident movements among the ornaments support the impression that she is a member of the household.

She does not behave like a frightened stranger. Instead, she walks to the fireplace and straightens the ornaments, smiles at Horace and calmly asks what he intends to do. When Horace threatens to cut the telephone wires and keep her from raising the alarm, she challenges him without appearing afraid. Her controlled replies make her seem confident that she has authority in the house. She also appears to understand Horace's position: she points out that he fears prison and says she has always liked the wrong kind of people. Horace interprets this as sympathy and believes he may have persuaded her to let him go.

The woman then turns his hope of escape into a way to use him. She says that she promised her husband she would take the jewels to the bank but left them in the safe. She wants to wear them to a party that night, yet claims she has forgotten the numbers needed to open the safe. Her explanation sounds plausible to Horace because he has already recognised that the safe is easy to open. He agrees to help, even though opening it will expose him to further risk. She assures him that her husband will be away for a month and that the safe can be repaired before his return.

Several details could have made Horace question her story. He has no proof that she is the owner, and her calm arrival at a house where a burglar is working is unusual. Her claim that she has forgotten the safe's numbers should also seem doubtful, especially when she expects Horace to open it and hand over valuable jewels. Her story about the bank, her husband and the party cannot be checked. Yet she supplies each detail with confidence, while her apparent familiarity with the dog and the rooms gives the performance credibility. The reader later learns that the real owner is a gray-haired, sharp-tongued woman of sixty, not the young woman Horace met.

Horace's judgement fails largely because he wants to believe the woman. He fears prison and

welcomes what seems to be a chance to leave safely. He also thinks of himself as a decent man who steals only from the rich to buy books, rather than as a criminal harming others. That self-image lets him treat his own robbery as understandable while trusting the woman's apparent request for help. He is experienced with locks, but he is not careful about judging people. His eagerness to please her is clear when he removes his gloves to give her his cigarette lighter.

After opening the safe, Horace gives the woman the jewels and leaves happily, believing that he has helped her and kept his promise to stop stealing. He has, however, left his fingerprints throughout the room because he opened the safe without gloves. The real owner denies knowing him, and the police arrest him for the jewel robbery. No one believes his account of the young woman. Horace becomes the victim of a more skilful thief: the woman has gained the jewels by exploiting his fear, vanity and willingness to accept a convenient story. His arrest reveals that careful planning cannot protect a criminal who abandons caution and mistakes a convincing performance for honesty.

**Q5. 2 marks · Short answer**

How does the young woman persuade Horace to open the safe and give her the jewels?

**Answer**

The young woman pretended to be the owner's wife, claiming she had forgotten the safe's numbers and needed the jewels for a party. She promised to let Horace go if he opened it for her.

**Q6. 5 marks · Long answer**

Do good intentions or desirable ends justify dishonest actions? Discuss your view, referring to Horace Danby's actions and considering whether it can ever be excusable to act less than honestly.

Full answer on SmartKalike: https://smartkalike.com/cbse/class-10/english/a-question-of-trust

**Q7. 9 marks · Very long answer**

Where does Horace go wrong in the robbery, and why does he fail to suspect the woman? Explain how his belief that he is an honest man shapes his choices and what the outcome reveals about his judgement.

Full answer on SmartKalike: https://smartkalike.com/cbse/class-10/english/a-question-of-trust

**Q8. 2 marks · Short answer**

Why is Horace arrested after the robbery at Shotover Grange?

Full answer on SmartKalike: https://smartkalike.com/cbse/class-10/english/a-question-of-trust

**Q9. 2 marks · Short answer**

How does the real owner's wife show that the young woman was not who Horace believed her to be?

Full answer on SmartKalike: https://smartkalike.com/cbse/class-10/english/a-question-of-trust

**Q10. 2 marks · Short answer**

What had Horace done to study Shotover Grange before attempting the robbery?

Full answer on SmartKalike: https://smartkalike.com/cbse/class-10/english/a-question-of-trust


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