

Collegedunia NCERT Notes

NCERT Revision Notes

Chapter 19: Ajamil and the Tigers

These notes explain Ajamil and the Tigers as a political satire. Revise the literal story, the figurative level, the tiger and sheep symbols, Ajamil's strategy and the poem's anger at power.

Also see for this chapter: [NCERT Solutions](#)

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1 Chapter Snapshot

The poem looks like a lively animal tale. A starving group of tigers asks its king for help, the king attacks Ajamil's sheep dog, and the dog defeats every tiger before the attack can reach the sheep.

1.1 Core Facts

At the literal level, the poem is fast, comic and story-like. At the deeper level, it shows how a clever ruler manages enemies, followers and moral language.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Poet	Arun Kolatkar, Indian poet writing in English and Marathi.	Use in the opening line.
Form	A satirical fable with animal figures and political meaning.	Use for genre questions.
Ajamil	The shepherd who pretends to accept the tiger king's lies.	Use for political strategy.
Sheep dog	Honest protector who exposes danger through action.	Use for conscience and truth.
Tigers	Hungry, violent power group that masks appetite as friendship.	Use for figurative level.

One-line summary

The poem shows how public friendship can hide hunger, fear and bargaining in political life.



1.2 NCERT Focus Areas

The NCERT questions ask students to move from story to meaning. Always write both levels because the chapter tests allegory, satire and political behaviour.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Literal level	Tigers, sheep, king, dog and shepherd act in a story.	Start summaries.
Figurative level	Groups stand for power, common people and political deals.	Use in analysis.
Pretence	Ajamil knows the lie but chooses to act convinced.	Key for Q3.
Refusal to look	He avoids the sheep dog's truthful protest.	Key for Q4.
Satire	The poem mocks the political class with comic exaggeration.	Use for final question.

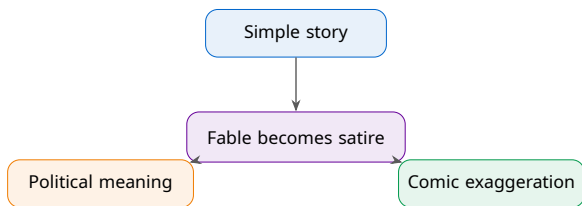
Fast start

For every NCERT answer, write one sentence about the animal story and one sentence about political meaning.

1.3 Why the Poem Feels Like a Fable

Fables use simple story figures to carry a moral or social point. Kolatkar uses a shepherd, sheep, tigers and a dog because each figure is easy to remember.

- **Animals simplify power:** the tigers are hungry and dangerous.
- **The shepherd complicates morality:** Ajamil is clever, not innocent.
- **The dog shows plain truth:** he catches the tigers and rejects their lies.
- **The treaty shows satire:** enemies become friends after a meal and gifts.



Common error

Do not call Ajamil only kind. His kindness is

also strategy. He feeds the tigers to protect the sheep.

2 Literal Story and Plot Movement

The plot is short but carefully staged. The movement runs from hunger to attack, defeat, excuse-making, hospitality and treaty.

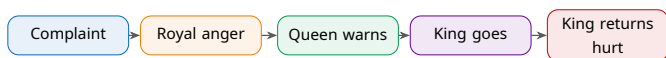
2.1 Opening Hunger

The tiger people are starving. Their complaint is that Ajamil's new sheep dog blocks their access to meat. This makes the sheep dog the first real force in the poem.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Starvation	The tigers have had no food for many days.	Shows urgency.
Sheep dog	He blocks their path to the sheep.	Shows protection.
Tiger king	He reacts with pride and promises punishment.	Shows rash power.
Queen	She warns him to be careful.	Shows ignored caution.
Dawn attack	The king goes alone into danger.	Shows overconfidence.

Political reading

In public life, hunger can mean demand for resources, office, money or control. The poem turns appetite into political pressure.



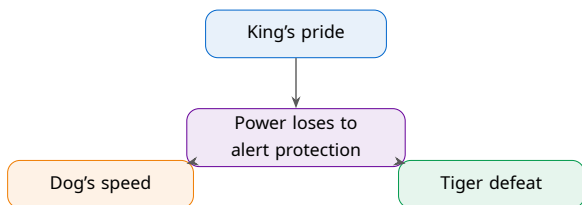
2.2 The Failed Attack

The tiger king returns with an injured body and a new plan. He calls for a group attack because he has learnt that one-on-one bravery will not work.

Attack Pattern

Pride + defeat + fresh plan = political face-saving.

- *The king cannot admit weakness directly.*
- *He turns private defeat into public strategy.*
- *The group follows the leader even after failure.*



2.3 The Dog's Victory

The dog defeats all fifty tigers and the tiger king. The poem makes this victory comic by saying the dog seems to be in many places at once.

- The dog protects the sheep before the tigers touch them.
- He turns attackers into prisoners of war.

- He places the whole group before Ajamil.
- His action proves the tiger king's later story false.

Answer cue

Use the dog whenever a question asks about truth, protection or moral protest.

Speed

quick as lightning

Protection

keeps sheep safe

Capture

takes every tiger

Honesty

rejects tiger lies

Warning

makes frantic signs

Conscience

Ajamil avoids
his eyes

3 Symbols and Figurative Level

The poem's main exam skill is reading symbols. The tigers and sheep are not only animals. They carry political and social meaning.

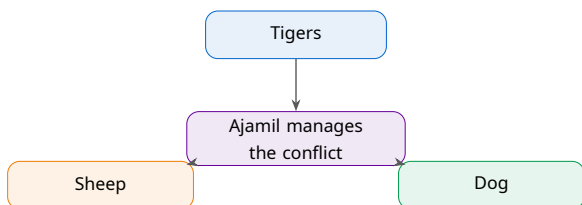
3.1 Tigers and Sheep

The tigers stand for powerful groups that use hunger, force and clever language. The sheep stand for ordinary people who are vulnerable in a system controlled by stronger groups.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Tigers	Powerful, hungry and ready to attack.	Political class or predatory power.
Tiger king	Leader who turns defeat into negotiation.	Leadership and manipulation.
Sheep	Ordinary people whose safety is at risk.	Common people.
Dog	Alert protector who sees danger clearly.	Truth or honest resistance.
Pond	Shared space after the treaty.	Managed peace.

T-S-D-A

Remember **T-S-D-A**: *Tigers seek, Sheep suffer, Dog detects, Ajamil adjusts.*



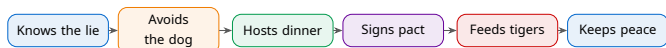
3.2 Ajamil as Political Manager

Ajamil is not fooled. The poem says he pretends to believe the tiger king. This is why the line about him not being a fool matters.

- He understands that the tigers are dangerous.
- He also understands that open punishment may not end the danger.
- He uses dinner, gifts and treaty language to control appetite.
- His strategy keeps peace, but it also accepts compromise with predators.

Common error

Do not write that Ajamil believes the tiger king. The poem uses pretended and seemed to show controlled performance.



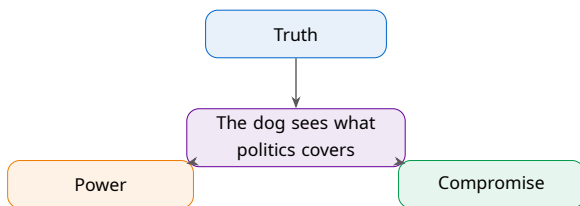
3.3 The Sheep Dog's Moral Position

The sheep dog is simpler than Ajamil. He has caught the attackers and expects truth to be recognised. His disgust shows the difference between direct morality and political management.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Never told a lie	The dog works by plain truth.	Use for moral contrast.
Frantic signs	He tries to expose the tiger king.	Use for protest.
Ajamil refuses	The shepherd avoids the dog's truthful eyes.	Use for Q4.
Simpler lines	The dog cannot understand political compromise.	Use for character.
Disgust	He sees that lies are being accepted.	Use for tone.

Public systems

Honest officials, witnesses or ordinary citizens may see the truth clearly. Political bargains can still ignore them.



4 Satire and Political Anger

Satire exposes a social problem through humour, exaggeration and irony. Kolatkar's poem is funny on the surface, but its target is serious.

4.1 What the Satire Attacks

The poem attacks political behaviour that turns violence into friendship, hunger into negotiation and public lies into official language.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
False friendship	The attackers call themselves friends.	Use for irony.
Treaty language	A pact covers appetite and fear.	Use for satire.
Gifts	Sheep, leather jackets and wool settle conflict.	Use for bargaining.
Common bond	Full stomachs create peace.	Use for ending.
Flute	The shepherd gains leisure after managing danger.	Use for final lines.

Satire Formula

Comic surface + serious target + ironic ending = political satire.



4.2 Anger of the Common Man

The common person is trapped because the powerful group is fed instead of

punished. The poem's anger comes from that compromise.

- The sheep survive, but they remain part of the bargain.
- The tigers are rewarded after trying to attack.
- The honest dog is ignored.
- Ajamil gains peace by feeding the predators.
- The system looks stable, but justice feels compromised.

Satire answer

Write that the poem is effective because its comic animal story makes political compromise look absurd and painful.

Common people

protected but traded

Power group

dangerous
but hosted

Leader

speaks friendship
after attack

Manager

chooses peace
over justice

Truth-teller

ignored at
key moment

System

stable but unfair

4.3 Humour with a Hard Edge

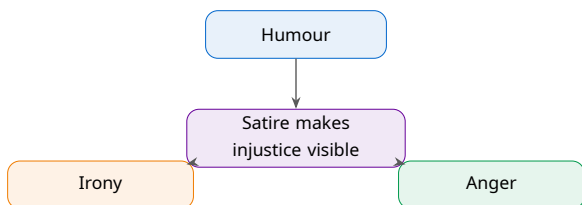
The poem uses casual speech, quick action and comic body images. The injured tiger king is funny, but the larger system is not funny.

Tone

The tone is comic, ironic and angry. The reader laughs at the tiger king, then notices the darker political bargain.

Tone error

*Do not describe the poem as only humorous.
The humour is a method used to expose anger.*



5 Important Lines and Answer Cues

The NCERT questions often depend on particular phrases. Learn the phrases with the idea they carry, not as isolated quotations.

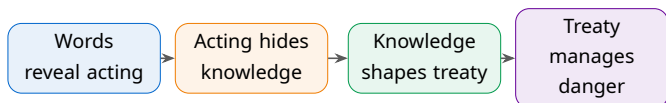
5.1 Pretended and Seemed

These words prove that Ajamil is acting. He does not accept the tiger king's lie innocently. He performs belief because that helps him manage the crisis.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Pretended	Ajamil chooses to appear convinced.	Shows calculation.
Seemed	Outward appearance differs from inner knowledge.	Shows irony.
Wasn't a fool	The poet confirms Ajamil's intelligence.	Connect Q3.
Refused eyes	He avoids the dog's truthful protest.	Connect Q4.
Treaty	The lie becomes public peace.	Connect politics.

P-S-F

Use ***P-S-F***: *Pretended, Seemed, Fool*. These three words prove Ajamil knows more than he shows.



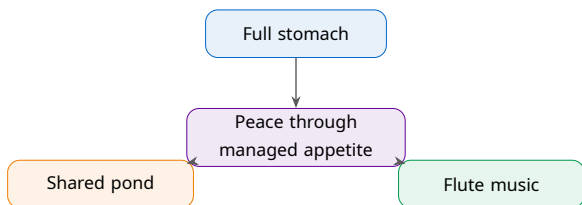
5.2 Play the Flute All Day

Playing the flute suggests leisure, control and pastoral calm. Ajamil can relax only after he has arranged a balance between sheep and tigers.

- It does not mean he is careless.
- It means he has managed the threat for now.
- The phrase also creates irony because peace depends on feeding predators.
- The common bond is not love. It is full stomachs.

Reading the ending

Peace in the poem is practical. It is not moral purity. Everyone drinks from the same pond because hunger has been managed.



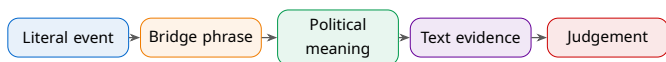
5.3 Literal to Figurative Answer Bridge

Many students lose marks because they explain only the story. Use a bridge sentence to move from story to meaning.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Story sentence	The tiger king lies after being defeated.	Begin with plot.
Bridge sentence	This shows how power changes language after failure.	Move to meaning.
Meaning sentence	Political actors may rename attack as friendship.	Finish analysis.
Evidence sentence	Ajamil pretends to believe this lie.	Add text detail.
Judgement sentence	The satire is sharp because the bargain works.	Close answer.

Exam sentence

Use: "At the literal level..., but at the figurative level..." This one frame fits most chapter answers.



6 NCERT Answer Plans

Use these answer plans to write complete responses without over-retelling the poem.

6.1 Question-wise Pointers

The six NCERT questions move from symbolism to politics, pretence, conscience, ending and satire. Keep answers short but layered.

Question	Core point	What to include
Q1	Tigers and sheep carry fable and allegory.	Explain strong vs vulnerable.
Q2	Ajamil shows political management and compromise.	Mention strategy.
Q3	Pretended and seemed show he knows the lie.	Connect to not a fool.
Q4	He avoids the dog's eyes to avoid moral truth.	Mention conscience.
Q5	Flute is leisure; common bond is shared appetite.	Explain ending.
Q6	Satire exposes anger at unfair political systems.	Judge effectiveness.

Answer rule

Each answer needs three parts: plot detail, symbolic meaning and one clear judgement.

Q1
symbols

Q2
politics

Q3
pretence

Q4
conscience

Q5
ending

Q6
satire

6.2 Fable, Allegory and Satire

The Try This Out task asks for forms. Know the difference because the poem uses all three in connected ways.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Fable	A short tale, often with animals, carrying a lesson.	Animal story level.
Allegory	Characters and events stand for larger ideas.	Political meaning.
Satire	Humour or irony exposes a social fault.	Attack on politics.
In this poem	The fable becomes allegory and the allegory becomes satire.	Best summary.

F-A-S

F-A-S: *Fable tells, Allegory stands for, Satire stings.*

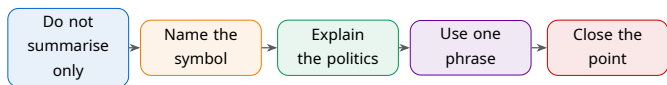
6.3 Common Mistakes

Avoid answers that flatten the poem into a moral tale. The chapter expects political reading.

- Do not say the tigers become truly good.
- Do not say Ajamil is innocent or fooled.
- Do not ignore the sheep dog.
- Do not treat the treaty as pure friendship.
- Do not write a long summary when the question asks about a phrase.

Revision warning

If an answer has no political meaning, it is incomplete for this chapter.

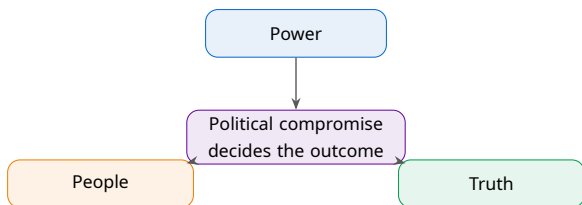


7 Quick Reference Summary

This final section gives a last-minute recall sheet for exam revision.

7.1 Characters and Their Functions

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Ajamil	Strategic shepherd.	Political manager.
Tiger king	Wounded leader who lies well.	Power after failure.
Tiger people	Hungry group seeking access to meat.	Predatory class.
Sheep dog	Fast, truthful protector.	Conscience and resistance.
Sheep	Protected but bargained over.	Common people.



7.2 Five-mark Revision Frame

1. Start with the poem's fable surface.

2. Explain the allegorical figure asked in the question.
3. Add one action or phrase from the poem.
4. Connect it to political behaviour.
5. End with the effect: satire, anger or irony.

Last-minute line

Write "Kolatkar uses a comic animal fable to expose serious political compromise" when you need a strong opening.

Why it matters

The poem helps students see how literature can criticise public systems without naming a particular party or leader.

Final recall

Story, Symbol, Satire: *first say what happens, then what it stands for, then what it criticises.*

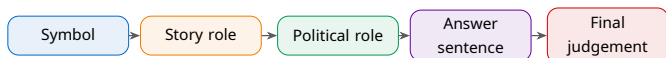
8 Exam Revision Drills

Use these drills after reading the notes once. They are built for quick practice, not for long memorisation.

8.1 One-minute Symbol Drill

Cover the notes and recall the symbol, its story role and its political role. Then compare your recall with the table below.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Tigers	They want meat and attack the sheep fold.	Predatory power that seeks resources.
Sheep	They are the animals Ajamil protects.	Common people under pressure.
Dog	He stops the attack and rejects the lie.	Truthful conscience and protection.
Ajamil	He pretends to accept the tiger king's excuse.	Political manager who chooses compromise.
Treaty	It follows dinner and gifts.	Official language covering appetite.



Drill method

Write one symbol sentence daily. Example: The tigers are literal animals, but they also show predatory political power.

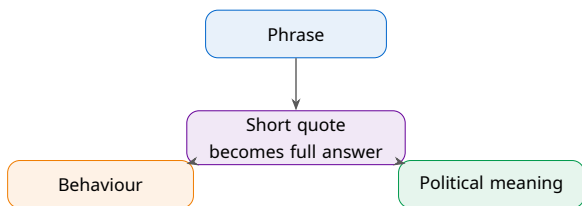
8.2 Two-minute Phrase Drill

The poem's important words are small.
They control the answer because they show
Ajamil's inner knowledge.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Pretended	Ajamil acts as if he believes the tiger king.	He knows the statement is false.
Seemed	The outside appearance is not the inner truth.	The reader sees irony.
Wasn't a fool	The poet confirms his intelligence.	He chooses strategy.
Refused to meet	He avoids the dog's truthful eyes.	He avoids moral discomfort.
Common bond	Full stomachs create shared interest.	Peace is practical, not pure.

Phrase mistake

Do not quote a phrase and stop. Explain what behaviour the phrase reveals.



8.3 Three-minute Satire Drill

Write a short paragraph using this order:
comic surface, serious target, ironic result
and reader effect.

1. Comic surface: hungry tigers and a clever sheep dog create a funny animal tale.
2. Serious target: the poem attacks public systems where power speaks in lies.
3. Ironic result: attackers become guests and treaty partners.
4. Reader effect: the ending makes peace look useful but morally uneasy.

Comic
animal plot

Target
political class

Irony
attack becomes
friendship

Cost
truth is ignored

Peace
stomachs are full

Effect
anger under humour

Paragraph test

If your paragraph can explain why the dog is disgusted, it has understood the satire.

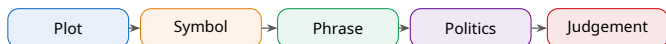
8.4 Five Common Question Openers

Use these openers to avoid wasting time in the exam. Change the second sentence to match the exact question.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Symbol question	At the literal level, the poem is an animal story.	At the figurative level, the figures represent political forces.
Ajamil question	Ajamil is not a simple innocent shepherd.	He understands the lie and uses it for management.
Dog question	The sheep dog stands for direct truth.	His disgust shows the cost of political compromise.
Ending question	The ending creates practical peace.	Its irony lies in the fact that hunger, not goodness, becomes the bond.
Satire question	The poem uses humour to expose public life	The reader laughs first, then notices the unfair

Final check

A complete answer has plot, symbol and judgement. If one of the three is missing, revise the answer.



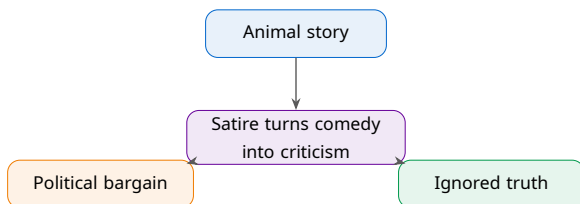
8.5 Last-page Recall Sheet

Read this page once before closing the chapter. It puts the whole poem into short exam-ready pairs.

Focus	Meaning	Use in answers
Main conflict	Hungry tigers want sheep; the dog blocks them.	Power meets resistance.
Main strategy	Ajamil pretends to believe the tiger king.	Compromise manages danger.
Main irony	Attackers are fed and sent back with gifts.	Justice is uneasy.
Main anger	The truthful dog is ignored.	Common truth loses space.
Main ending	Full stomachs create peace at the pond.	Appetite becomes the bond.

Closing revision

If a question asks "how effective", mention that the poem is memorable because it is funny, simple and politically sharp.



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