The Emperor's Seed

About the passage

A. Read to understand

1. Rewrite this paragraph by writing these eight sentences in the correct order.
A year later, all except one youth turned up with plants of all varieties, shapes, and sizes. The emperor wanted to choose his successor. He gave them a seed each to plant and grow. He called all the young people of his kingdom together. He knew Ling had not substituted his boiled seed with another one. The emperor asked them to return with their plants exactly after one year. He announced Ling would be the new emperor. He noticed Ling standing at the back with an empty pot.

The emperor wanted to choose his successor. He called all the young people of his kingdom together. He gave them a seed each to plant and grow. The emperor asked them to return with their plants exactly after one year. A year later, all except one youth turned up with plants of all varieties, shapes, and sizes. He noticed Ling standing at the back with an empty pot. He knew Ling had not substituted his boiled seed with another one. He announced Ling would be the new emperor.

2. Answer these questions.
   1. What advice did Ling’s mother give him on the day of inspection?
   Ans. Ling’s mother advised him to go with his pot and to be honest about what has happened.

   2. Why was Ling terrified when the emperor called him to the front?
   Ans. Ling was terrified when the emperor called him to the front because he thought that the emperor knows that he is a failure and maybe he will have him killed.

   3. Why did the plants not grow from the seeds that the emperor had given?
   Ans. Plants did not grow from the seeds that the emperor had given because all were boiled seeds.

B. Read to infer

1. Why did Ling think he was a failure?
Ans. Ling thought that he was a failure because six months went by; still nothing had grown in his pot.

2. Why was the emperor surprised to see the plants brought by the other youths?
Ans. The emperor was surprised to see the plants brought by the other youths because he gave everyone boiled seed which would not grow.

3. Why did Ling choose to stay behind everyone with his pot?
Ans. Ling chose to stay behind everyone with his pot because everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing.

4. What was the reason behind Ling’s disbelief at the emperor’s announcement?
Ans. The reason behind Ling’s disbelief at the emperor’s announcement was that he could not even grow his seed then how could he be the new emperor.

5. Tick (✓) the quality that the emperor was looking for in his successor.
   a) hard work [ ]  b) punctuality [ ]  c) truthfulness ✓

C. Discuss
1. Why do you think the emperor did not want to choose one of his children or assistants as his successor?
Ans. The emperor did not want to choose one of his children or assistants as his successor because he wanted a courageous and honest person to inherit his throne.

2. Tick (✓) the words that best describe the other young people who had received seeds from the emperor. Then, give reasons for your choice.
   a) ambitious ✓  b) courageous [ ]  c) cowardly ✓
   d) cunning ✓  e) dishonest ✓  f) shrewd ✓
Ans. Ambitious – All youth were ambitious as everyone wanted to be the emperor.

   Shrewd and Cunning - Everyone, except Ling, have substituted another seed for the one the emperor gave, when they found that the seed would not grow.
Dishonest – No one except Ling bring the emperor a pot with his seed in it.

Cowardly – No one had the courage to tell the truth to the emperor.

3. Share with the class an incident when you found it difficult and challenging to be honest, but you were brave and supported the truth. Also, share how you felt after that.
Ans. Answer will vary.