Q1. **Briefly explain why the story of Hans and the Miller was applicable to the Water-rat?**

*Ans.* Hans and the Miller are the central characters in the story ‘The Devoted Friend’, written by Oscar Wilde. This story is told by the Linnet and is definitely applicable to the Water-rat. The Miller is extremely egocentric (=self-centred). He manipulates little Hans, always taking advantage of his naïveté (=innocence) and generosity, and never giving anything in return. Similarly, the Water-rat wants his friend to be devoted to him, but he does not understand what it means to return the favour. In theory, both the Miller and the Water-rat hold friendship in high regard, but in practice, they represent one-sided friendship and they are always at the receiving end.

Q2. **How did the Miller justify his not asking Hans to share some of his good things during the winter?**

*Ans.* Hans and the Miller are the central characters in the story ‘The Devoted Friend’, written by Oscar Wilde. Poor Hans used to suffer a good deal from cold and hunger in winter because there were no fruit or flowers in his garden. The Miller never came to see little Hans. Scolding his son, the Miller justified himself on the basis of his so-called concern for Hans and self-serving theory of friendship. The Miller says that Hans might get envious of their warm fire, good supper, and great cask of red wine. Secondly, Hans might ask to have some flour on credit which the Miller could not give because he does not want to confuse friendship with flour.

Q3. **What was the supreme manifestation of the Miller’s selfishness which caused Hans to lose his life?**

*Ans.* Hans and the Miller are the central characters in the story ‘The Devoted Friend’, written by Oscar Wilde. The Miller promised his old wheelbarrow to little Hans. He sent him off on long errands (=journeys) and got him to help at the mill, but never carried out his promise. However, the Miller’s selfishness was supremely manifested when he sent Hans to bring the doctor for his son but refused to lend him his new lantern. The Miller said that it would be a great loss if something happened to it, but he never realized that the dark, stormy night and the dangerous moor with a lot of deep holes might claim Hans’s life. While returning from the doctor’s house, Hans lost his way and wandered off on the moor, and there he drowned.

Q4. **Comment briefly on the Miller’s claim to have been Hans’s best friend.**

*Ans.* Hans and the Miller are the central characters in the story ‘The Devoted Friend’, written by Oscar Wilde. The Miller’s claim to be Hans’s best friend cannot stand examination. He said “Real friends should have everything in common”, but he never shared anything with poor Hans when he was starving in winter. He said “when people are in trouble, they should be left alone”, but when the Miller’s son fell off the ladder, he came to poor Hans for help. When the Miller promised that he would give little Hans his old wheelbarrow, the Miller said “generosity is the essence of friendship”. However, he never carried out his promise. Rather, he expected a great of generosity from poor Hans. In return of the worthless wheelbarrow, the Miller first took a big plank of wood, then flowers, then sent him on long errands, then got him to work at his mill, and finally sent him to bring the doctor for his son. Even at Hans’s funeral, the Miller demanded the best place on account of being his best friend.