

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 3: TWO STORIES ABOUT FLYING



TWO STORIES ABOUT FLYING

~Summary~

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STORY- I His First Flight

This story is about a family of seagulls. There was a young child in the family who was unable to fly even after several tries. The story highlights the importance of family and friends in one's life. It also gives the message that one needs to believe in self to overcome all the hurdles of own life.

The Seagull Family

The seagull family consists of six seagulls-mother, father, three sons and one daughter. All of them except the youngest son are expert in flying high. His parents have tried several times to teach him how to fly but he is scared to do that and does not want to try anymore. He relies on the food that his parents bring back from their flights.

Young Seagull's Fear of Flying

The youngest son is afraid of flying as he thinks that if he flies, his wings would not support him and he would fall down in the sea below and drown. Even his parents have rebuked him. They even threatened him if he doesn't fly, he would die of hunger, but he does not try.

Parents Leave Young Seagull Alone

After so many failed attempts, his parents leave him alone on the rock without food. They even taunt him for his cowardice. The young seagull looks at his brothers and sister enjoying swimming, diving in the sea water for fish to feed themselves, but no one comes near him to offer food.

Hunger and Heat Increase

As the time passes, the young seagull could not tolerate the hunger and the heat. He moves closer to the ledge and pretends to fall asleep but nobody takes notice of him.

His brothers and sister have already had hearty breakfast and father seems busy in admiring and cleaning the feathers on his back. The mother looks at him and tries to tempt him with pieces of fish. His begging and crying does not affect her.

Young Seagull Dives for Food

The young seagull was very hungry. He was surprised enough at his mother's ignorance of his pitiful condition. Thus, he dives for food. He begins to fall down with a scream as soon as he dives.

Flight Begins

The young seagull begins to fall in the sea. He is afraid of drowning, so he tries to spread his wings outwards and begins flying. He feels a little dizzy but all his fear vanished (disappeared). He soars slowly downwards and upwards. He could finally fly on his own.

Joy of Flight and Reunion of Family

The seagull becomes so happy and soars higher calling 'ga, ga, ga'. It was really a joyous moment for the whole family; his brothers and sister along with his parents come near to encourage and cheer him. The young seagull successfully made his first flight.

NCERT SOLUTION

Questions (Page No. 36)

(THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT)

Question. 1 Why was the young seagull afraid to fly? Do you think all young birds are afraid to make their first flight, or are some birds more timid than others? Do you think a human baby also finds it a challenge to take its first steps?

Answer: The young seagull was afraid to fly because it was its first flight. It is a well known fact that doing something for the first time is challenging. Therefore, all young birds must be afraid to make their first flights. Similarly, a human baby would also find it a challenge to take its first step.

Question. 2 “The sight of the food maddened him.” What does this suggest? What compelled the young seagull to finally fly?

Answer: The young seagull was very hungry. It was this hunger that ultimately compelled it to fly. Its hunger only intensified when it saw its mother tearing at a piece of fish that lay at her feet. It cried to her, begging her to get some food. When its mother came towards it with food in her beak, it screamed with joy and anticipation. However, she stopped midway. It wondered why she did not come nearer. Not being able to resist or control its hunger any longer, it dived at the food in its mother’s beak. At that moment, his hunger overpowered his fear of the great expanse of sea beneath the cliff. Finally, this plunge was followed by the natural reaction of its body, i.e., to fly.

Question. 3 “They were beckoning to him, calling shrilly.” Why did the seagull’s father and mother threaten him and cajole him to fly?

Answer: The young seagull was afraid to fly. Even when it saw its brothers and sisters flying, and its parents helping and teaching them, it could not gather enough courage to make that first flight. That is why its father and mother were calling to it shrilly and scolding it. They threatened to let it starve on its ledge if it did not fly. They did so because they wanted it to leave its fear behind and learn to fly.

Question. 4 Have you ever had a similar experience, where your parents encouraged you to do something that you were too scared to try? Discuss this in pairs or groups.

Answer: This question requires you to use your own perspective as well as your analytical skills. The answer to the question would vary from one person to another. It is suggested that you read the text carefully and try attempting it on your own.

Question. 5 In the case of a bird flying, it seems a natural act, and a foregone conclusion that it should succeed. In the examples you have given in answer to the previous question, was your success guaranteed, or was it important for you to try, regardless of a possibility of failure?

Answer: This question requires you to use your own perspective as well as your analytical skills. The answer to the question would vary from one person to another. It is suggested that you read the text carefully and try attempting it on your own.

STORY- II The Black Aeroplane

The Trip to England

The narrator was flying his aeroplane at night over France to England. He was eager to meet his family. He was dreaming of his holiday. The stars were shining in the clear sky. Even the city-Paris could be seen down below. He called Paris Control to get instructed about the way. He was instructed to turn 12 degrees West.

Fear of Storm

Everything was going well before he saw the storm clouds and Paris was about 150 kilometres behind him. It was natural for the narrator to panic. He knew that it was not possible to fly up and over those storm clouds. He was confused for a moment.

A Risky but Brave Decision of the Author

As everything was fearful at the moment, the narrator decided to risk and flew into the storm, but everything went out of control. The compass as well as other instruments stopped working. He was unable to see outside the plane as the plane was jumping and twisting in the air. He tried to contact Paris Control but couldn't. He was lost in the storm.

A Black Aeroplane Appeared

Suddenly, the narrator saw another black aeroplane in the storm by his side without lights on its wings. It seemed strange to him but he was glad to see another person in the storm.

The pilot of another plane waved at him and signalled to follow so he did that because he did not have other option except it.

A Safe Landing

The narrator flew for half an hour which was quite strange to him as he had fuel only for five or ten minutes. He felt fearful but suddenly he saw two bright lines in front of him. It was a runway. He was able to land safely which gave him a sigh of relief. It was just like a miracle for him.

The Greatest Surprise

The narrator came out from his plane to thank the pilot of the black aeroplane but he was shocked to see no one there. He went to Control Tower and asked the woman about the place and the black aeroplane. Hearing his words the woman laughed and said that there was no other aeroplane except his. It was a big surprise to the narrator. He was dumbfounded as he had no explanation for the miracle.

Conclusion of Two Stories About Flying

In the chapter – Two Stories About Flying, there are two stories that teach us that inner strength and determination is necessary to overcome fear. Having the courage to face tough situations helps us to overcome complex situations in our lives.

NCERT SOLUTION

Questions (Page No. 40)

(THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT)

Question. 1 "I'll take the risk." What is the risk? Why does the narrator take it?

Answer: The risk was to fly through the black storm clouds. The narrator took the risk because his home was beckoning him. He was dreaming of his holiday and looking forward to be with his family. He also wanted to get home in time to enjoy a good English breakfast.

Question. 2 Describe the narrator's experience as he flew the aeroplane into the storm.

Answer: As he flew into the storm, everything went black. It was impossible to see anything outside the plane. It jumped and twisted in the air. When he looked at his compass, he saw that it was turning round and round. It was dead. Along with it, the other instruments, including the radio, were also dead. Suddenly, he saw another aero plane. Its pilot waved at him, asking him to follow. He was glad to find a helper. He was using his last fuel tank and there was only enough fuel to fly five or ten minutes. Then, the other pilot started to go down and he followed. He suddenly came out of the clouds and saw the runway, on which he then landed his plane safely.

Question. 3 Why does the narrator say, "I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota..."?

Answer: After landing, the narrator was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota because he had a horrific and scary experience flying that plane. He was happy that he had landed the plane safely. That is why he was not sorry to walk away. Instead, he wanted to know where he was and who the other pilot was.

Question. 4 What made the woman in the control centre look at the narrator strangely?

Answer: The narrator had asked the woman in the control centre about the identity of the other pilot. She looked at him strangely as there was no other plane in the storm. She told him that no other plane was flying that night. His was the only plane she could see on the radar.

Question. 5 Who do you think helped the narrator to reach safely? Discuss this among yourselves and give reasons for your answer.

Answer: Probably, it was the narrator's own self that helped him through the storm. There was no other plane in the storm as the woman at the control centre could see only his plane

on the radar. Also, no other plane was flying that night. In his fear, he might have been hallucinating. He was a good pilot, and it might have been his own self that came to his help.

Questions (Page No. 40)

(THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT)

Question. 1 Study the sentences given below.

- They looked like black mountains.
- Inside the clouds, everything was suddenly black.
- In the black clouds near me, I saw another aeroplane.
- The strange black aeroplane was there.

The word 'black' in sentences (a) and (c) refers to the very darkest colour. But in (b) and (d) (here) it means without light/with no light.

'Black' has a variety of meanings in different contexts. For example:

- 'I prefer black tea' means 'I prefer tea without milk'.
- 'With increasing pollution the future of the world is black' means 'With increasing pollution the future of the world is very depressing/ without hope'.

Now, try to guess the meanings of the word 'black' in the sentences given below. Check the meanings in the dictionary and find out whether you have guessed right.

- Go and have a bath; your hands and face are absolutely black. _____
- The taxi-driver gave Ratan a black look as he crossed the road when the traffic light was green. _____
- The bombardment of Hiroshima is one of the blackest crimes against humanity. _____
- Very few people enjoy Harold Pinter's black comedy. _____
- Sometimes shopkeepers store essential goods to create false scarcity and then sell these in black. _____
- Villagers had beaten the criminal black and blue. _____

Answer:

- The meaning of 'black' in this sentence is that the face and hands are dark with dust and heat. Here, 'black' refers to an angry look.
- Here, 'black' refers to an angry look.
- Here, 'blackest' refers to the darkest and cruelest crime against humanity.
- Here, 'black' refers to dark and gloomy comedy.

5. The meaning of 'black' in this sentence is that the shopkeepers sell the described goods 'at a higher price'.
6. Here, 'black' means that the criminal suffered excessive beating at the hands of the villagers.

Question. 2 Match the phrases given under Column A with their meanings given under Column B:

	A		B
1	Fly a flag	-	Move quickly/ suddenly
2	Fly into rage	-	Be successful
3	Fly along	-	Display a flag on a long pole
4	Fly high	-	Escape from a place
5	Fly the coop	-	Become suddenly very angry

Answer:

	A		B
1	Fly a flag	-	Display a flag on a long pole
2	Fly into rage	-	Become suddenly very angry
3	Fly along	-	Move quickly/ suddenly
4	Fly high	-	Be successful
5	Fly the coop	-	Escape from a place

Question. 3 We know that the word 'fly' (of birds/insects) means to move through air using wings. Tick the words which have the same or nearly the same meaning.

(swoop, flit, paddle, flutter, ascend, float, ride, skim, sink, dart, hover, glide, descend, soar, shoot, spring, stay fall, sail flap)

Answer: The words which have the same or nearly the same meaning as 'fly' are as follows:

Swoop, flit, float, dart, soar, hover, sail skim, glide, flutter.