



QUESTION BANK – REACH FOR THE TOP (2023-24)

Class: IX

Sub: ENGLISH

THEME

The lessons, 'Reach for the Top' is divided into two parts. The first part is based on the life of Santosh

Yadav, and the second extract is based on the life of Maria Sharapova.

Both extracts reiterate the relevance of the age-old adage, "Where there is a will there is a way." There

is no substitute for hard work. Life is not a bed of roses and we do get pricked by the thorns before we

are able to cherish the softness of the petals and the fragrance of the flowers.

SUMMARY

PART I

Santosh was the sixth child born in a family of five sons, in a small village, Joniyawas, in the Rewari district of Haryana. Her parents were affluent landowners who could afford to send their children even to Delhi for their education. Being a girl, Santosh had to face a lot of problems. She however, decided to revolt and threatened that she would not enter into matrimony, if she did not acquire education. She also warned them that she would earn her own money if required, to pay her fees. Finally, her parents gave up. After her schooling, she joined the Maharani College for her higher studies. It was in the hostel at Aravalli Hills at Maharani College, that she was introduced to the wonders of mountaineering. She enrolled at Uttarkashi's Nehru Institute of Mountaineering. She scaled the Mt. Everest at the tender age of twenty years, was what helped her. She was not just a mountaineer, but a very sensitive and emotional person. In the 1992 Everest mission, she was successful in providing care to a climber who was nearby about to die, by sharing her supply of oxygen. She was also a part of the Indo Nepalese Women's Expedition that scaled the Everest, and became the first woman to scale the peaks of the Everest for the second time. When she unfurled the Indian flag, she says it was truly a spiritual moment for her as a true Indian. A very fervent environmentalist, Santosh taught all the mountaineers a lesson by bringing down 500 kgs of garbage from the top of the Himalayas. She was an epitome of grit, dedication and struggle, who proved to be an ultimate winner, a pride of the nation

PART II

This part is about a Russian girl, Maria Sharapova, who reached the peak of women's tennis when she was barely eighteen. Poised beyond years, the Siberian-born teenager took just four years as a professional to reach the pinnacle. At the age of 10, her father Yuri launched her on the path of success and stardom. She was away from her mother, which was very difficult for her, but it taught her the lesson that everything comes at a price.

She faced a lot of problems during training from her co-trainees. The insults and humiliations did not suppress her, but motivated her to pursue her dreams with even more determination. She won the Wimbledon in 2004 and secured the world number one spot within a year. She says that hard work is her mantra for success. What kept her going despite all odds that she faced was the dream of becoming the world's top player. The stories of these two young women prove quite certainly that success follows those who dream and work towards achieving those dreams, with focus and determination.

I. Answer these questions in one or two sentences each. (The paragraph numbers within brackets provide clues to the answers.)

1. Why was the 'holy man' who gave Santosh's mother his blessings surprised? (1)

Ans: The 'holy man' who gave Santosh's mother his blessings was surprised because Santosh's grandmother sought that Santosh's mother be blessed with a daughter. This was quite astonishing for the holy man because people mostly seek blessings for having a son.

2. Give an example to show that even as a young girl Santosh was not ready to accept anything unreasonable. (2)

Ans: Even as a young girl, Santosh was not ready to accept anything unreasonable. She was not content with her place in traditional way of life and began living life on her own terms from the start. While other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh used to wear shorts.

3. Why was Santosh sent to the local school? (3)

Ans: Although Santosh's parents were rich landowners and could have sent her to the best schools, Santosh was sent to the local school because of the prevailing custom in the family.

4. When did she leave home for Delhi, and why? (4)

Ans: She left home for Delhi when she was sixteen because she wanted to get a proper education.

5. Why did Santosh's parents agree to pay for her schooling in Delhi? What mental qualities of Santosh are brought into light by this incident? (4)

Ans: Santosh's parents agreed to pay for her schooling in Delhi when she informed them about her plans to earn money by working part time to pay for her education. By this incident, we get to know that Santosh had a very clear goal of getting properly educated no matter what.

II. Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words)

1. How did Santosh begin to climb mountains?

Ans: Kasturba Hostel where Santosh used to stay during her college days, faced Aravalli Hills. She used to watch the villagers go up the hill and vanish after a while. She decided to check out the mountains herself. She asked the villagers if she could join them to which they agreed. This is how Santosh began to climb mountains.

2. What incidents during the Everest expedition show Santosh's concern for her teammates?

Ans: During the Everest expedition in 1992, Santosh provided special care to a climber who was dying at the South Col. She could not save him but she managed to save another climber, Mohan Singh, by sharing her oxygen with him.

3. What shows her concern for the environment?

Ans: Santosh collected and brought down 500 kilograms of garbage from the Himalayas on her way back from the 1992 Everest expedition. This shows her concern for the environment.

4. How does she describe her feelings at the summit of the Everest?

Ans: She says that it took her some time for the enormity of the moment to sink in. She unfurled the Indian tricolour and held it aloft on the roof of the world.

She tells that the feeling is indescribable to watch the Indian flag flying on top of the world. She felt proud as an Indian.

5. Santosh Yadav got into the record books both times she scaled Mt Everest. What were the reasons for this?

Ans: Santosh Yadav got into the record books both times she scaled Mt Everest. The first time she climbed Mt Everest, she got the record of the youngest woman in the world to achieve the feat. The second time she climbed Mt Everest, she became the only woman to climb the Everest twice.

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT

1. "grandmother who was standing close by, told him that they did not want a son. The 'holy man' was also surprised!"

- (a) Whose grandmother, is she?
- (b) Why was the holy man surprised?
- (c) Why did they not want a son?

Answer:

- (a) The grandmother mentioned here is Santosh Yadav's grandmother.
- (b) The holy man was surprised to know that they did not want a son.
- (c) They did not want a son because they already had five sons in the family.

2. "From the beginning I was quite determined that if I choose a correct and a rational path, the others around me had to change, and not me."

- (a) Who is saying these lines?
- (b) Why does she say so?
- (c) What does she mean by rational path?

Answer:

- (a) These lines are being spoken by Santosh Yadav.
- (b) She says so because she was not a traditional village girl.
- (c) By rational path she means a path which is logical and not based on myths and traditions.

3. “The nine-year-old had already learnt an important lesson in her life.”

- (a) Who is the nine-year old girl?
- (b) Why was this statement made?
- (c) Why did this happen?
- (d) What was the lesson that she learnt?

Answer:

- (a) The nine-year old girl is Maria Sharapova.
- (b) This statement was made because she had to be away from her mother.
- (c) This happened because of visa restrictions.
- (d) She learnt the lesson that tennis excellence would only come at a price.

4. “This is her mantra for success.”

- (a) Who is ‘her’ in the above line?
- (b) What has she succeeded?
- (c) What is meant by ‘mantra’?
- (d) Mention any one of her mantras.

Answer:

- (a) ‘Her’ in the above line is Maria Sharapova.
- (b) She has succeeded in becoming the No. 1 tennis player.
- (c) ‘Mantra’ refers to the guiding or motivating forces that help you with your work.
- (d) ‘I work hard at what I do’ ‘I am very competitive’ ‘It’s my job’

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Was Santosh happy as her name suggested?
2. Describe the family of Santosh Yadav.
3. What were the problems Sharapova faced during her training? How did she react?
4. ‘Maria Sharapova cannot be pigeon-holed or categorized.’ Explain
5. Pick up an incident from the extract that exhibits Santosh’s strength of character according to you.

Answer:

1. The name Santosh was given to the little girl because everyone was very happy and contented when a girl was born after the five boys. But Santosh was not very content because she could not adhere to the traditional and restricted lifestyle that was expected from a girl-child.
2. Santosh Yadav belonged to an affluent family in Haryana. She was the sixth child of the family. There were five boys who were older to her. She lived with her parents and grandmother. Santosh’s family was an orthodox family, who abided strictly by the traditional of the community.
3. Sharapova was a little girl when she began training. She would fall asleep much earlier than the other pupils who were older than her. They would come into the room as late as 11 pm. And wake her up and order her to clean up the room. This kind of

ragging, humiliation and insults, instead of buckling her under pressure, made her a stronger and more determined person. She was steadfast about pursuing her dream.

4. Maria Sharapova was a little girl was not born with a silver spoon in her mouth. It was her grit and determination that helped her climb the ladder of success. She was fond of reading, singing, dancing and wearing sophisticated gowns on one hand and on the other hand, she loved pancakes that lifted her to the top of the world. Therefore, she cannot be categorized into any particular group or class of people. She was one of a kind.

5. The incident that exhibited her strength of character was when Santosh helped her co-climber. On her trek up the Everest, two of her co-climbers were seen in a distress situation, due to empty oxygen cylinders. One of them succumbed, but she rescued Manoj Singh by sharing her oxygen cylinder till they reached their destination.

Reach for the Top

The chapter presents the students with the life and achievements of two inspirational ladies- Santosh Yadav and Maria Sharapova. Santosh Yadav, the only woman in the world to have climbed the mighty Mount Everest twice, hails from India. A patriot and an environmentalist at heart, she tells how she developed the dream of reaching the top of the world- the summit of Mount Everest.

We also are taken through Maria Sharapova's journey of becoming the world's number one tennis player. The chapter talks about her struggles and how she never let anything come in between her and her goal.

III. Select the best option for the following questions:

Q 1. During her training period, other pupils would come in at 11 pm and order Maria to

- (a) **To clean the room**
- (b) To cook for them
- (c) To make them desserts
- (d) All of the above

Q 2. Maria put up all the humiliations and insults during her training period to

- (a) To pursue her education
- (b) To pursue her music
- (c) **To pursue her dream for tennis**

(d) To be the richest tennis player in the world

Q 3. Sharapova loved reading novels of

(a) Sydney Sheldo

(b) Charles Dickens

(c) William Shakespeare

(d) Arthur Conan Doyle

Q 4. What are Sharapova's hobbies?

(a) Fashion, Dancing

(b) Singing

(c) Reciting

(d) (Both (a) and (b))

Q 5. What's Sharapova's mantra for success?

(a) Being competitive

(b) Working hard

(c) Respecting her job

(d) All of the above

Q 6. What was the most important thing for Maria?

(a) to earn money

(b) to do a good business

(c) to become number one in the world

(d) all of the above

Q 7. Maria is associated with

(a) Serbia

(b) Siberia

(c) Moscow

(d) Paris

Q 8. Depressing treatment in the U.S made Maria _____

(a) weak

(b) nervous

(c) timid

(d) tough

Q 9. Who went to the United States with Maria?

(a) her mother

(b) her father

(c) her grandmother

(d) her teacher

Q 10. When did Maria Sharapova get the world number one position in women's tennis?

(a) 22 August 2004

(b) 22 August 2005

(c) 22 August 2006

(d) 22 August 2007

Q 11. Maria Sharapova belongs to

(a) England

(b) Russia

(c) Germany

(d) America

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Give a pen-picture of Santosh Yadav.
2. Give the character sketch of Maria Sharapova.
3. Compare and contrast the characters of the parents of Santosh Yadav and Maria Sharapova.

Answers: 1. Santosh was a strong-headed girl who was born as the sixth child in an affluent family in a small village in Haryana. She began to live her life on her own terms from a very early age. While other girls of her age around her wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred wearing shorts. When she turned sixteen, her parents pressurized her to get married, but she threatened her parents that she would never marry if she did not get a proper education. She eventually left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi. Quite naturally, her parents refused to pay for her education. But undeterred (unaffected) by their reaction, she told them that she would work part-time and pay for her education. Eventually, they agreed to finance her schooling in Delhi. She joined Maharani College for higher studies. It was during a vacation that she secretly enrolled for a course in mountaineering. Her strong will-power and passion for excellence enabled her to become the youngest woman to scale Mt. Everest, she saves a fellow climber by sharing her oxygen cylinder with him. She is an embodiment of all the qualities of an ideal woman and a good human being.

2. Maria Sharapova was born on 19th April 1987 to Yuri and Yelena in Russia. She was very fond of playing the game of tennis, and her rapid ascent in a fiercely competitive world began at a very young age with a level of sacrifice that few children would be prepared to endure at that age. She was taken to the United States by her father to enable her reach her chosen goal. Separation from her mother was not easy for the little girl, who understood that life was not a bed of roses. She had to overcome a lot of difficulties and make many sacrifices during her journey which she did, without losing her self-confidence and focus. This young girl conquered the world of tennis at the young age of eighteen and was crowned world No. 1. Maria is yet another example to show to the world, that every step backward is an assurance of two steps forward on the road that leads to success.

3. There was nothing in common among the two sets of parents. Santosh's parents were from a very traditional Indian background. They were guided by the norms of the society and community. Girls are generally not to be seen or heard. It was actually surprising that they desired having a girl child. This child however, was not going to bog down by traditional or society. Her rigid parents had to face stiff revolt and challenges as their daughter had a mind of her own. She refused to be limited because she was a girl. She loved to wear comfortable clothes. She wanted to study. Her parents wanted her to get married at the age of sixteen, but had to give into her wishes because she had made up her mind to learn and grow. Left to her parents, perhaps the world would not have known the two-time Everest climber, Santosh Yadav. Maria, the little Russian girl reached the pinnacle of glory because of the support and sacrifices made by her parents. It was her father who took her to America, worked hard to ensure that she does not fall short of the best training. He had to live away from the wife during this time, due to visa restrictions. They were with her in all her endeavors, and helped her mentally and financially to become the World No.1 at the very young age of eighteen. Parents play a very important role in the development of their children. But it is equally important for the child to know what he/she wants in life.

Extended Response Question:

1. According to you, what are the social customs that do not allow the girls to get proper education? Should we revolt against the old social system? Why/ why not?

Ans: There are many social customs like early marriage, looking after household chores, social insecurity, etc. which do not allow the girls to get proper education in rural areas. Girls are expected to lead a traditional way of life. Revolt against the social customs and age-old traditions will bring unrest in society. If we revolt against any system, we pay a heavy cost. But it does not mean that we should continue to be victim of the system.

We need education and awareness. We need to change the mindset of the people. We need to lead the battle. Mere modernity and westernization will not bring desirable changes. A remarkable change has come in our society. Now, girls are excelling in all the fields. So, 'revolt' is not a solution, reform is the need of the hour.