



INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR

Class: XII	Department: ENGLISH	2023 – 2024
Question Bank	Topic: JOURNEY TO THE END OF THE EARTH - BY TISHANI DOSHI	Note:

Journey to the end of the Earth

Reading with insight

Questions and Answers

Question 1.

How do geological phenomena help us to know about the history of humankind?

Answer:

Geological phenomena such as the drifting of land masses and their separating into countries help us to know about the history of humankind. A visit to Antarctica around which Gondwana once existed, is like going back to past as it gives us an understanding of evolution and extinction, ozone and carbon, where humankind came from, and where it is headed.

Question 2.

What are the indications for the future of humankind?

Answer:

All thoughtless activities of humankind such as increasing cities and megacities, cutting forests and turning those to concrete jungles, careless burning of fossil fuel, depleting ozone and increasing carbon dioxide, and global warming, melting ice caps and shields, our battle with other species for limited resources and other similar reckless activities point to a grim future for humankind. If concrete steps are not taken immediately, these drastic changes may lead to the end of the world.

Question 3.

‘The world’s geological history is trapped in Antarctica’. How is the study of this region useful to us?

Answer:

Antarctica holds half a million-year-old carbon track records in its layers of ice. It gives us an understanding of evolution and extinction, ozone and carbon. A visit to Antarctica, around which Gondwana once existed, is like going back to the past. Witnessing the geological phenomena, such as the drifting of land masses and their spreading into countries, help us to know about the history of humankind. These are visible signs of where humankind came from and it gives us a clear understanding of where human life is headed if we do not take care of the environment. Actually seeing with our own eyes all these changes, make us understand that global warming is a real threat.

Question 4.

What are Geoff Green's reasons for including high school students in the Students on Ice Expedition?

Answer:

Geoff Green feels that students are the future generation of policy-makers. They should be provided an opportunity to have this life-changing experience at a young age in order to foster a new understanding and respect for our planet. It would help them to absorb, learn and act for the benefit of the planet. The youngsters still have the idealism to save the world and they need to understand that it belongs to them. So, to sensitize them, it is important to provide them the visible life changing experience.

Question 5.

'Take care of the small things and the big things will take care of themselves.' What is the relevance of the statement in the context of the Antarctica environment?

Ans. This statement means that if small things are taken care of, big things will take their own care. There are tiny grasses, called phytoplankton, in the southern oceans that use the sun's energy to assimilate carbon and synthesize organic compounds by photosynthesis. Marine life and birds in the region sustain themselves on these grasses. Any disturbance in the environment in Antarctica might affect the activities of the phytoplankton, which, in turn, might affect the existence of the other life forms that depend on them. Small things like the phytoplankton are important in the food chain.

Question 6.

Why is Antarctica the place to go to understand the Earth's present, past and future?

Answer:

The author states that to understand the earth's present, past and future, Antarctica is the right place to go. Antarctica is relatively untouched in this respect as it has never had human population. It is relatively pristine. It holds in its ice cores half a million-year-old carbon records, trapped in the layers of ice. It embodies all that is pre-historic: cordilleran folds, pre-Cambrian granite shields ozone and carbon: evolution and extinction. The simple eco system and lack of biodiversity indicate how little changes in the environment can have big repercussions.

A visit to Antarctica and witnessing the geological phenomena, such as the drifting of land masses, glaciers receding and ice shelves collapsing makes us understand that global warming is a real threat. Hence, to study the earth's past, present and future, these factors make Antarctica the best place to go.

Extra Questions and Answers

Question 1.

When did the author start her journey to Antarctica and what had she to pass through?

Answer:

The author started her journey 13.09 degrees north of the Equator in Madras—she was on board a Russian research vessel—the Akademik Shokalskiy. She had to pass through nine time zones, six checkpoints, three bodies of water and at least as many ecospheres. After travelling over hundred hours in combination of a car, an aeroplane and a ship, she reached Antarctica.

Question 2.

What emotions did the author experience when she reached Antarctica at last?

Answer:

The author finally set foot on the Antarctica continent after travelling over 100 hours in combination of car, aeroplane and ship. Her first emotion on seeing the vast expansive white landscape and the blue horizon was of relief. She experienced the emotion of wonder at its immensity and isolation and its strange relationship with India.

Question 3.

How would you describe Gondwana?

Answer:

Gondwana was a giant amalgamated southern supercontinent, centering around present-day Antarctica. Humans had not arrived on the global scene. The climate was much warmer. There was a huge variety of flora and fauna. Gondwana thrived for 500 million years. When the age of the mammals got underway, the landmass was forced to separate into countries. Antarctica separated from the whole landmass shaping the globe as we know it today.

Question 4.

What is that thing that can happen in a million years and would be mind-boggling?

Answer:

The author says that in a million years India may push northwards, jamming against Asia. It will buckle its crust and form the Himalayas – South America may drift off to join North America. The Drake Passage may open up to create a cold circumpolar current. Antarctica may remain frigid, desolate and at the bottom of the world.

Question 5.

In what respect, Tishani Doshi's encounter with Antarctica is a chilling prospect?

Answer:

The author remained there for two weeks. For a sun worshipper South Indian, being face to face with ninety per cent of earth's total ice volume was a mind-boggling and chilling prospect. It was also a chilling experience for circulatory and metabolic functions and for imagination. It is like walking into a giant ping-pong ball with no human markers such as trees, billboards, and buildings.

Question 6.

What is the visual experience in Antarctica?

Answer:

In Antarctica the visual scale ranges from the microscopic to the mighty midges and mites to blue whales and icebergs as big as countries. The writer refers to it as walking into a giant ping-pong ball devoid of any human markers, without trees, billboards, buildings. Days go on in 24 hours austral summer light. A ubiquitous silence, interrupted only by an occasional avalanche or calving ice sheet consecrates the place.

Question 7.

How, according to the author, has mankind etched its dominance over nature?

Answer:

According to the author, though civilizations have been around for barely a few seconds on the geological clock, yet they have created a ruckus by their various activities like exploiting

the limited resources and careless burning of fossil fuels. In the short span of existence on the earth, they have already created a blanket of carbon dioxide and increased the average global temperature.

Question 8.

How has Antarctica sustained itself and managed to remain pristine?

Answer:

Antarctica, on account of being the coldest, windiest and driest continent in the world, has never sustained a human population and has thus managed to remain pristine. This has prevented man from being able to create ruckus in this part of the world by his thoughtless exploitation of the natural resources.

Question 9.

How is global temperature increasing? What are the immediate fears due to it?

Answer:

Global temperature is increasing due to the increasing burning of fossil fuels. It has now created a blanket of carbon dioxide around the world. This has given birth to questions like: Will the West Antarctica ice sheet melt entirely? Will the Gulf Stream Ocean current be disrupted? Will it be the end of the world as we know of? It may be. It may not be.

Question 10.

How is Antarctica a crucial element in the debate of climate change?

Answer:

Antarctica is a crucial element not because it has no human population but because it holds in its ice cores half a million year old carbon records. They are trapped in its layers of ice. It will open up areas of knowledge about the past, present and future of the earth.

Question 11.

What are the reasons for the success of the Students on Ice programme?

Answer:

Sitting distant in the comfort zone of our houses, any talk about global warming looks so unreal and one can be unconcerned. But the visible experience of seeing glaciers retreating, ice caps melting and ice shelves collapsing makes one understand and realize what global warming is all about. The indications for the future of humankind become clear when one actually witnesses the geological phenomena.

Question 12.

The author says that her Antarctica experience was full of such epiphanies. What was that best epiphany that occurred there?

Answer:

The Akademik Shokalskiy got wedged into a thick white sheet of ice. The captain decided to turn around and asked the passengers to walk on the ocean. Underneath their feet they saw 180 metres of living, breathing salt water. Crab eater seals were stretching and sunning themselves on ice floes much like stray dogs under a banyan tree. It was a great epiphany, a revelation.

Question 13.

What is that beauty of balance that a trip to Antarctica unfolded to the author?

Answer:

The author was wonderstruck by the beauty of balance in play on our planet. Travelling across nine time zones, three bodies of water and as many ecospheres was an experience that unfolded a wide range of climate, geographical features, and flora and fauna. It was also a visible experience of the varied geographical phenomena.

Question 14.

Why does the author conclude the chapter by saying that a lot can happen in a million years, but what a difference a day makes?

Answer:

The author concludes the chapter by saying that much more can really happen in a million years as it happened in the case of Antarctica. But in this long period, changes even in a day make a great difference because global climate is changing. It is posing a threat to the beauty of balance on the earth.

Question 15.

What are phytoplanktons? What is their importance?

Answer:

Phytoplanktons, the grasses of the sea, are single-celled organisms living in the southern ocean. They nourish and sustain the entire ocean's food chain, being first link in the food chain of ocean. Using sun's energy, they assimilate carbon and synthesize organic compounds. The diminishing number of these organisms due to the depletion of ozone layers affects other organisms of the ocean, finally leading to the extinction of life on earth.

Question 16.

Why does the author feel that the prognosis for the human beings is not healthy?

Answer:

The world is battling an ever increasing population, leading to burning of fossil fuels. This has created a blanket of carbon dioxide around the world thereby increasing global temperatures. All this is hazardous and life threatening for all flora and fauna. Hence the future of mankind in fact, all life on earth, is bleak. So, the author is correct in saying that the prognosis for man is not encouraging and healthy. . . j

Question 17.

Why is it necessary to remain fully equipped while walking on ice?

Answer:

While walking on ice, the troupe was fully kitted out in Gore-Tex (type of spiked boots that help in walking on ice) and glares. The spiked boots protect them from falling down on ice which might result in injury and the glares protect the eyes because the sunglasses can injure their eyes, particularly the retina.

Question 18.

Do you think that programmes like the Students on Ice do more harm than good? Support your answer.

Answer:

I personally feel that such trips do more harm than good. We have ruined the earth as much as we could and as wide as we could go, because Antarctica was far away and extremely cold. But now we have so many reasons to go to this pristine continent. Let's not encourage

such trips. After all, what else do we have to learn about the earth than the fact that we have been running a business, not a service. Please spare Antarctica.

Student on Ice is an educational journey to Antarctica. It took high school students to Antarctica where they understood the seriousness of the threat that the end of the earth is quite near. By visiting Antarctica they would act their bit to save the planet from further deterioration. The educational youth of today is the hope for the earth and if they are more informed and more aware of the weakening strength of the earth, they will be able to steer the government machinery of their countries as they grow up.

Question 19.

Does the study of the lesson give you a feeling that man is his own great enemy?

Answer:

In his 12000-year-long stint on the earth so far man has caused untold harm to the planet, its environment and biodiversity. His activities in the name of development have spelt doom for the flora and fauna and his own existence is in danger. Man is to blame for all the havoc and ruckus created on earth. Thus it is quite right that man is his own great enemy.

Long Questions and Answers

Question 1.

What is the significance of the title 'Journey to the End of the Earth'?

Answer:

The title 'Journey to the End of the Earth', has more than one meaning. It describes an educational journey to Antarctica undertaken by a group of high school students. To learn more about the real impact of global warming and future of the earth 52 students went to the coldest, driest, windiest continent in the world called Antarctica in Russian research vessel, the Akademik Shokalskiy.

The author calls it a journey to the end of the earth because it began 13:09 degrees North of Equator in Madras, involved crossing nine time zones, six checkpoints, three oceans and as many ecospheres. She travelled over 100 hours in combination of a car, an aeroplane and a ship. The journey being to the extreme south of the the earth, was really towards the end of it. Another meaning of this title is more significant as the warnings that Antarctica gives are shocking and much concerning the humanity and the millions of other species on the earth. The changes taking place in Antarctica are pointing a warning finger at the existence of of the earth; the earth is journeying to its end.

Question 2.

The author says, 'It was nothing short of a revelation: everything does connect.' What does it mean?

Answer:

Antarctica is a perfect place to study how little changes in the environment can have big repercussions as far as Antarctica is concerned. Various human activities like exploiting the limited resources and careless burning of fossil fuel have already created a blanket of carbon dioxide, increased the average global temperatures and caused the retreating of glaciers, melting of ice caps and collapse of ice shelves as far as Antarctica. Global warming does not only change the geographical features, but also cause depletion in the ozone layer which will

affect the activities of the phytoplanktons, the tall grasses which support the lives of marine animals and birds of the region. Hence, the author says everything does connect and all human activities are interlinked with the geological phenomena, whatever be the geological distance.

Question 3.

By whom and with what objective was Students on Ice programme started? How far has it achieved its goals?

Answer:

The Students on Ice programme was started by Canadian Geoff Green. He felt students are the future generation of policy-makers. They should be provided an opportunity to have this life-changing experience at a young age in order to foster a new understanding and respect for our planet. It would help them to absorb, learn and, more importantly, act for the benefit of the planet.

Geoff Green was tired of taking celebrities and retired rich curiosity seekers who could only give back in a limited way. It means Geoff wanted something in return from his passengers to solve the problems relating to climate changes due to environmental pollution. It is difficult to imagine or be affected by the polar ice caps melting while sitting in our living rooms and so this visible life changing experience is important. Hence, this programme made the children learn that to save big things, small things must be cared for.

Question 4.

What makes Antarctica an ideal subject of study?

Answer:

Antarctica is the only place in the world which has never sustained a human population. It thus remains relatively pristine in this respect. But, more importantly, it holds in its ice core, half a million- year-old carbon records trapped in its layers of life. Antarctica has a simple ecosystem and lack of biodiversity. It is, therefore, a perfect place to study how little changes in the environment can have big repercussions. Visiting Antarctica means knowing where we have come from and where we could possibly be heading. This place holds the key to know the geological evolution and it shall reveal the earth's past, present and future.

Question 5.

The author states that her Antarctic experience was full of epiphanies, but the best occurred just short of the Antarctic Circle of 65-55 degrees south? Explain.

Answer:

Epiphanies is a Christian festival that celebrates the revelation or enlightenment. Here epiphanies are used metaphorically to suggest moments when the author suddenly becomes conscious of something that is very important to her.

The author experienced the rare of the rarest experiences there in Antarctica both in relation to beauty, wonder, and geological phenomena. Such masterly geological epiphany was experienced by her when the Akademik Shokalskiy got wedged into a thick white stretch of ice between the peninsula and Tadpole Island. The captain decided to turn around and asked the passengers to walk on the ocean. They kitted out in Gore-Tex and glares, walking on a white sheet of ice. Underneath their feet was a metre-thick ice pack. And underneath that, 180 metres of living breathing, saltwater lay before them. In the periphery, crabeater seals were

stretching and sunning themselves on ice floes. They were doing so like stray clogs will do under the shade of a banyan tree. It was nothing short of revelation. The author saw in it that everything does indeed connect. This really proved to be the most wonderful experience of all experiences of Antarctica.