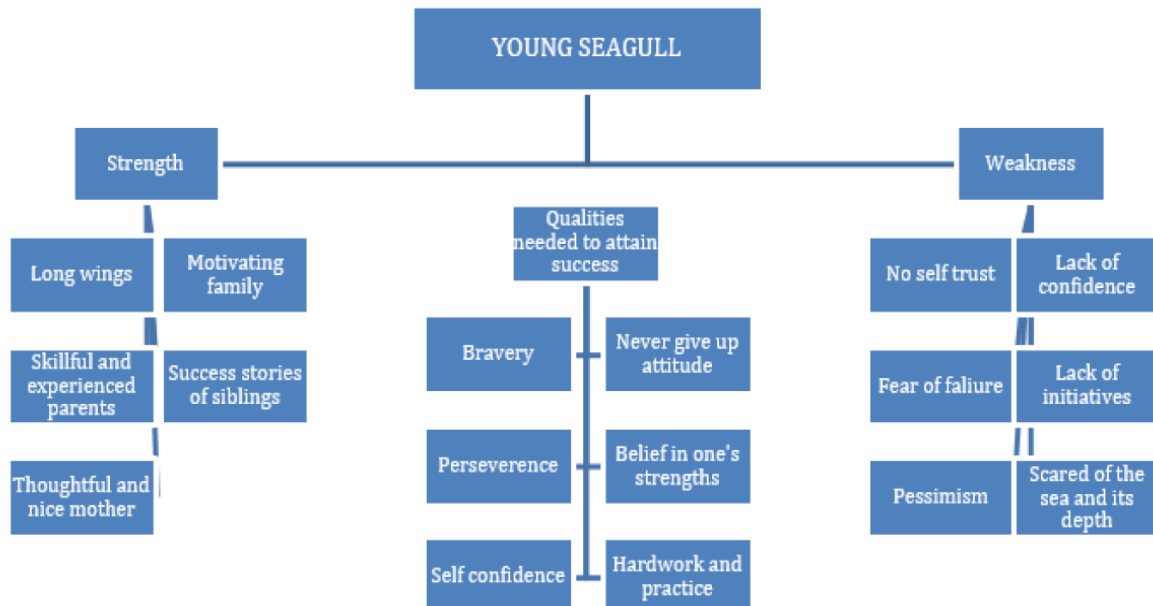




INDIAN SCHOOL AL WADI AL KABIR
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH (2024-25)
CLASS – X
QUESTION BANK- TWO STORIES ABOUT FLYING



SUMMARY

The story “His First Flight” is written by Liam O’Flaherty and is based on a young seagull who was afraid to take his first flight because he feared that his wings wouldn’t support him while flying. All his siblings took the plunge to fly fearlessly in the open air despite having shorter wings than him. On the contrary, the young bird could not muster up courage to take the plunge due to distrust on his wings. Whenever he tried to come forward towards the brink of the ledge while attempting to fly, he became afraid and went back. His parents constantly upbraided and threatened him that unless he flew away he would have to starve alone on the ledge, but all their efforts went in vain. He would just watch his parents teaching his siblings how to skim the waves and dive for fish.

One fine day, the whole family flew to a big plateau and taunted the young seagull for his cowardice. As the sun rays blazed on his ledge, he could feel the heat and was starving since the previous nightfall. The young bird begged his mother to bring him some food. He uttered a joyful scream when his mother quickly picked a piece of fish and flew across to him. He leaned out eagerly and jumped at the fish exasperated by hunger. Suddenly he fell outward in the open space and a monstrous terror seized him as he could feel that he was falling downward. The next moment he felt his wings spread outwards and he was able to fly fearlessly. Finally, the young seagull took his first flight and soared higher and skimmed through the waves and dived along with his siblings.

KEYPOINTS

- An interesting story of a young seagull who was afraid of flying.
- He had no trust in his own abilities and lacked confidence. He was full of fears.
- His parents encouraged, scolded, tempted and taunted him to make his plunge but he could not collect enough courage to fly.

- He was left alone for twenty four hours and was starving.
- His siblings were well trained by the parents.
- Being extremely hungry, he begged his mother for food.
- She picked up a piece of fish and flew across him. The sight of food maddened him. He dived.
- He cried and screamed out of fear when he was coming down. His wings opened up automatically. He flapped his wings.
- He was joined by his family in his first flight. His family appreciated him for his successful efforts and offered him scraps of dog fish.

EXTRACT BASED QUESTIONS:

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow.

1. That was twenty-four hours ago. Since then, nobody had come near him. The day before, all day long, he had watched his parents flying about with his brothers and sister, perfecting them in the art of flight, teaching them how to skim the waves and how to dive for fish. He had in fact, seen his elder brother catch his first herring and devour it, standing on a rock, while his parents circled around raising a proud cackle. And all the morning the whole family had walked about on the big plateau midway down the opposite cliff taunting him for his cowardice.

- Why didn't any of the family members of the young seagull come near him for a long period of time?
- Based on the above given passage, how can we say that the parents of the young seagulls had excellent parenting skills?
- Find the word which can be replaced by '**consume**' in the passage?
- The word '**adoration**' is an antonym of
- What was the flaw of the young seagull?

- They wanted him to muster up courage and take the first plunge.**
- They taught the young seagulls to perfect the art of flying, skim the waves and dive for fish and appreciated the elder one for catching a herring.**
- The word is 'devour'.**
- The word is 'taunting'.**
- He was too scared to plunge as he did not have self-confidence/ trust in the power of his wings.**

2. He stepped slowly out to the brink of the ledge, and standing on one leg with the other leg hidden under his wing, he closed one eye, then the other, and pretended to be falling asleep. Still, they took no notice of him. He saw his two brothers and his sister lying on the plateau dozing with their heads sunk into their necks. His father was preening the feathers on his white back. Only his mother was looking at him. She was standing on a little high hump on the plateau, her white breast thrust forward. Now and again, she tore at a piece of fish that lay at her feet and then scrapped each side of her beak on the rock.

- Why did the young seagull pretend to be asleep?
- Why should a seagull preen its feathers?

(c) “Small daily actions- such as a short walk, break from social media or even a *catnap*- can add up to have an impact on mental health.” Find out the word in the passage which means the same as the underlined word.

(d) What is “*an area of land that is higher than the land around it*” called?

(e) What did the mother seagull intend to do?

(a) The young seagull wanted to watch the actions of his family secretly and expected them to feel pity for him.

(b) A seagull preens the feathers to align them into the most aerodynamic shape for easier and more efficient flight.

(c) The word is ‘dozing’.

(d) A plateau.

(e) She intended to tempt the young seagull so that he would fly in the air.

3. His parents and his brothers and sister had landed on this green flooring ahead of him. They were beckoning to him, calling shrilly. He dropped his legs to stand on the green sea. His legs sank into it. He screamed with fright and attempted to rise again, flapping his wings. But he was tired and weak with hunger and he could not rise, exhausted by the strange exercise. His feet sank into the green sea, and then his belly touched it and he sank no farther. He was floating on it, and around him his family was screaming, praising him and their beaks were offering him scraps of dog-fish.

(a) What does the phrase, “this green flooring” refer to?

(b) What made the young seagull exhausted?

(c) Find out the word that means the same as *coaxing*.

(d) Which sentence in the passage suggests that the young seagull was not mentally much prepared enough to encounter the new challenging situation in his life?

(e) How did the family members of the young seagull express their feelings of being proud of his achievement?

(a) The green flooring refers to the green surface of the sea.

(b) The young seagull was tired because he was weak with hunger and he made a successful attempt for his first flight that was hard for him.

(c) Beckoning.

(d). He screamed with fright and attempted to rise again, flapping his wings.

(e) They congratulated him by screaming around him, praising him and offering him scraps of dog-fish.

4. “He had been afraid to fly with them. Somehow when he had taken a little run forward to the brink of the ledge and attempted to flap his wings he became afraid. The great expanse of sea stretched down beneath, and it was such a long way down — miles down. He felt certain that his wings would never support him; so he bent his head and ran away back to the little hole under the ledge where he slept at night. Even when each of his brothers and his little sister, whose wings were far shorter than his own, ran to the brink, flapped their wings, and flew away, he failed to muster up courage to take that plunge which appeared to him so desperate.”

i) Who are being referred to here as ‘them’?

A. Friends of the young seagull

B. Family members of the young seagull

C. The seagull’s brothers

D. All of the above

ii) What was/were the sight/sights that made the young seagull afraid of?

- A. the vast sky
- B. the vastness of the sea
- C. the great distance from the cliff to the sea
- D. Both B & C

iii) Which of the following sentences does not contain the same meaning of the word **'BRINK'** as used in the following sentence.

"Somehow when he had taken a little run forward to the **brink of the ledge ..**"

- A. The **brink of a cliff** was just wide enough for her foot to fit fully.
- B. Horses were moving on the **highest brink above**, their hooves clicking against the rocks.
- C. Favoured with a dark and foggy night the party of 150 men and a guide reached the first **brink of the hill** undiscovered.
- D. Extreme stress had driven him to **the brink of a nervous breakdown**.

iv) Which of the following sentences show that the young seagull made an attempt to fly?

- i) Somehow when he had taken a little run forward to the brink of the ledge and attempted to flap his wings, he became afraid.
- ii) The great expanse of sea stretched down beneath, and it was such a long way down — miles down.
- iii) He felt certain that his wings would never support him; so, he bent his head and ran away back to the little hole under the ledge where he slept at night.
- iv) He failed to muster up courage to take that plunge which appeared to him so desperate.

- A. i-only
- B. ii & iii
- C. i & iv
- D. iii & iv

v) Which of the statements given below is **TRUE** based on your understanding of the extract?

- A. The young seagull's wings were shorter than those of his siblings.
- B. The young seagull's wings were as big as those of his siblings.
- C. The siblings' wings were bigger than those of the young seagull.
- D. The wings of the little sister of the young seagull were shorter than his wings.

i) **B. Family members of the young seagull (The young seagull's mother, father, two brothers and younger sister had already left him before 24hours.)**

ii) **D. Both B & C. (Both the great expanse/vastness of the sea and great distance from the cliff to the sea frightened the young seagull)**

iii) **D. Extreme stress had driven him to the brink of a nervous breakdown. (Only in this sentence among the options the word 'brink' is used to express a state of mind/stressful situation.)**

iv) **A. i-only ("Somehow when he had taken a little run forward to the brink of the ledge and attempted to flap his wings he became afraid." This sentence proves that the young seagull made a weak attempt though he could not fly.)**

v) **D. The wings of the little sister of the young seagull were shorter than his wings.
(Even when each of his brothers and his little sister, whose wings were far shorter than his own, ran to the brink, flapped their wings, and flew away)**

5. But when she was just opposite to him, she halted, her wings motionless, the piece of fish in her beak almost within reach of his beak. He waited a moment in surprise, wondering why she did not come nearer, and then, maddened by hunger, he dived at the fish. With a loud scream, he fell outwards and downwards into space. Then a monstrous terror seized him and his heart stood still. He could hear nothing. But it only lasted a minute. The next moment he felt his wings spread outwards. The wind rushed against his breast feathers, then under his stomach, and against his wings. He could feel the tips of his wings cutting through the air. He was not falling.

i) Find the reverse order in which the seagull felt the pressure of wind on different body parts.

- A. wings- stomach- breast feathers
- B. breast feathers-wings - stomach
- C. wings- breast feathers- stomach
- D. breast feathers – stomach- wings

ii) Why did the young seagull utter a joyful scream?

- A. He was happy that his mother was looking at him.
- B. He felt happy on seeing his mother coming towards him with food in her beak.
- C. He screamed with joy on seeing the food.
- D. He wanted to fly with his mother.

iii) What do you infer from the statements below?

- i) A monstrous terror seized him and his heart stood still.
- ii) He could feel the tips of his wings cutting through the air.
- A. Statement A is a fact while statement B is an opinion
- B. B adds further to the meaning of A
- C. Statement A is the opposite of statement B
- D. Both the statements, A and B, are opinions.

iv) How did the young seagull feel when he was falling down?

- A. excited
- B. gallant
- C. aghast
- D. refreshed

v) Which of the following quotes best suit the message/values highlighted in the passage?



(iii)



(iv)



- A. (i) & (iii)
- B. (i), (iii) & (iv)
- C. (i) & (ii)
- D. (ii) & (iii)

i) A. wings- stomach- breast feathers (Reverse order of the order given in the passage-” The wind rushed against his breast feathers, then under his stomach, and against his wings.”)

ii) B. He felt happy on seeing his mother coming towards him with food in her beak. (He was feeling lonely as well as hungry.)

iii) B. B adds further to the meaning of A (The fear of falling down transformed into the feeling of relief when he realised that his wings were powerful enough to fly.)

iv) C. aghast (“Then a monstrous terror seized him and his heart stood still. He could hear nothing.”)

v) A. (i) & (iii) (The seagull’s mother uses all possible strategies to motivate him to fly and make him fly by tempting him with a piece of fish. He overcomes his fear and gains confidence to enjoy his success at the end of the story.)

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q.1. Describe the methods used by the seagull’s family to help the young seagull overcome his fear and fly.

“His First Flight” is a story about the fear of a young seagull to take his first plunge. The time had come when he should fly like his family members. Though his siblings, whose wings were shorter than his wings, flew away successfully, he had no confidence to fly. His family left him alone on his ledge. His parents had come around the ledge calling to him shrilly, upbraiding him, threatening to let him starve on his ledge unless he flew away. They sat on the opposite cliff and ignored him. The parents trained his siblings and perfected their art of skimming, diving and catching fish. The Siblings laughed at his cowardice. They left him starving for twenty-four hours. At last his mother came towards him and tempted him to fly, showing a piece of fish in her beak. Thus, he took his first plunge.

Q.2. The young seagull found it difficult to fly for the first time. He felt that his wings would never support him. Was it not in his attitude to accept the challenges? Did he lack courage? Discuss the values that can help people accept challenges in life.

The young seagull's two elder brothers and the younger sister had started flying the previous day. However, he himself was unable to muster the courage to fly. He lacked confidence and felt that his wings wouldn't support him. However, I do not think that facing challenges was a problem for him. Still, he did lack confidence and courage. To accept and successfully face challenges, one must be fearless, determined and have clarity of thought and action. One must be ready to work laboriously after setting up a goal in life. The encouragement, support, motivation and appreciation of the dear and near ones can play a big role in achieving success as in the seagull's case.

Q.3. Taking the first plunge was considered a challenge by the young seagull, why? Describe the challenges you faced while learning to ride a bicycle/swimming or any skill.

Value Points:

Problems faced by the young seagull: Lack of confidence- hesitation to take the first step- too scared- feeling inferior- fear of failure-inexperience.

Keys to success: Muster up courage- practice- risk taking- gather knowledge- getting good training/tips from the experienced ones- never give up.

Q.4. The 'fight or flight response', that is, to stay and face a situation or run from it- is an automatic reaction to an event perceived as stressful or harmful. How would you evaluate the young gull's response on finding himself off the ledge?

At first, when the young seagull had taken a little run forward to the brink of the ledge and attempted to flap his wings he became afraid. The great expanse of sea stretched down beneath, and the great distance from the cliff frightened him. He felt certain that his wings would never support him, so he bent his head and ran away back to the little hole under the ledge where he slept at night. When he fell down in an attempt to get the piece of fish from his mother, initially, he was terrorized. But the fear was momentary. The next second, he flapped his wings and soared in the sky. He could feel the wings soaring through the air. So, we can infer that the seagull's response was 'fight' because it overcame the terror and flew well.

Q.5. Why did the young seagull's mother halt on reaching close to him with a piece of fish in her beak? How did the young seagull respond when she halted?

On reaching close to the young seagull, the mother halted with a piece of fish in her beak because she wanted to tempt him with food and encourage him to overcome his fear so that he would make an effort to fly. However, the young seagull was surprised when his mother halted and maddened by hunger, he dived at the fish, falling outwards and downwards into space.

Q.6. When did the seagull get over his fear of flying over the sea?

The seagull was afraid of flying over the sea because he thought that he would drown. His family decided to teach him a lesson. They left him unattended. The mother tore at a piece of fish that lay at her feet now and then flew towards him. But she stopped opposite him with her motionless wings. Since the seagull was hungry too much, he was compelled to attempt his first flight in order to get food. He was successful. This is when he got over his fear flying over the sea.

Q.7. How did the young seagull get over his fear of sea water and what was his family's reaction to it?

The young seagull had made his maiden flight successfully. When he was near the sea, he was flying straight over it. He observed a vast green sea all around him. He turned his beak

sideways and cawed amusedly. His family was very happy and landed ahead of him. They beckoned to him. When he landed on the sea, he began to sink but he tried in despair and his belly touched the water and he sank no further. He was floating on water. This way he got over his fear of seawater and his family praised him a lot and offered him the dog-fish as a reward.

Q.8. Do you think hunger was a good motivation for the young seagull in his first flight? Comment.

Yes, I do think that hunger played a vital role in the young seagull's attempt to start flying. He would not try to fly with them. His parents scolded him in a shrill voice and threatened him of starvation, but he still was afraid to fly. Then they left him alone. He was so hungry that he had to live on whatever he could find there. When he saw his mother with a piece of fish in her beak, he begged her for food. Then he uttered a joyful scream when he saw his mother flying across to him with a piece of fish in her beak. She stopped when she came opposite to him. When the young seagull realised that she wouldn't come nearer, and "maddened by hunger," he dived at the fish. This was his first attempt to fly. Gradually when his hesitation and fear were removed, he started flying which he enjoyed very much.

Q.9. How did the young seagull get over his fear of sea water and what was his family's reaction to it?

The young seagull had made his maiden flight successfully. When he was near the sea, he was flying straight over it. He observed a vast green sea all around him. He turned his beak sideways and cawed amusedly. His family was very happy and landed ahead of him. They beckoned to him. When he landed on the sea, he began to sink but he tried in despair and his belly touched the water and he sank no further. He was floating on water. This way he got over his fear of seawater and his family praised him a lot and offered him the dog-fish as a reward.

Q.10. "Then he completely forgot that he had not always been able to fly." Comment on the young seagull's first flight in light of this statement.

The young seagull was suffering from the pangs of hunger after his family left him alone. When he saw them on the plateau the next day, he tried to draw their attention. Then his wise and thoughtful mother flew across to him with a piece of fish in her beak. But she stopped opposite him with her motionless wings. "Maddened by hunger, he dived at the fish" though terrified, he felt his wings spread outwards. He could feel the tips of his wings cutting through the air. Now he was soaring gradually downwards and outwards. He was no more afraid of flying now. He flapped his wings once and he soared upwards. He screamed to encourage himself and share his happiness. He forgot that previously he was not able to fly.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q.1. Hesitations and fears play necessary parts in human life but we get success in any enterprise only when we overcome our doubts, hesitations and fears. Justify this statement in light of the young seagull's efforts to muster the courage to fly in the air.

Skills have to be learnt and sharpened in life with one's own laborious and sincere efforts. Parents can only help in teaching and encouraging us to learn things. But we have to learn them through our own efforts of trial and error. Everyone suffers from hesitations and fears in the beginning. It takes time to take the final plunge. So, it happened with the young seagull. In spite of constant encouragement and motivations, he couldn't muster the courage to fly. He was certain that his wings would not support him. He faced regular taunting and humiliations from his family. They even threatened to let him starve at the ledge unless he flew away. They

say that necessity is the mother of invention. Maddened by hunger, he dived at the fish which his mother was carrying in her beak in order to tempt him to take the first plunge. He felt his wings spreading outwards. Finally, he soared to come down over the sea. He floated on the green sea, as he mustered up confidence and courage. His family felt proud and joyous about his achievement. They celebrated his success by screaming around him and offering him pieces of tiger fish.

Q. 2. The young seagull's parents wanted him to fly, like his brothers and sister. How could the young seagull's newly flying siblings (Brother 1, Brother 2 and Sister) have motivated him? Write a brief conversation among them.

Model conversation

Brother 1. My dear brother, why are you so desperate?

Young Seagull: Oh! I am afraid that I can never fly.

Sister: Don't worry. Nothing is impossible. You can learn it. Look at me, I am younger than you and have shorter wings than yours. I have started flying well!

Brother 2: Oh no, I don't think he can do it. He is too scared to take the first plunge. That's why he prefers to sit here all alone.

Brother 1: Why not? He has strong wings. He can take the plunge.

Brother 2: No, he cannot fly, he thinks his wings are weak.

Young Seagull: That's true. I am afraid of the expanse of the green sea and its depth. I may fall down and die.

Sister: You can watch us closely while we fly. Please practice and I'm sure of your abilities. Let us fly.

Brother 1: We will be with you and save you in case of any danger.

Brother 2; That's right. Don't take my earlier remarks seriously. You are a strong seagull.

Young Seagull: Now I've realised, what I lacked was confidence. Thank you, dears, for your timely support. I'll overcome fear and make you all proud!

Q.3 Your parents may sometimes behave like the young bird's parents. They may seem strict and unrelenting. Does it mean that they do not care for you? Explain your views about it with reference from the story.

Value Points

Home is the first school-Parents first teachers, proper guidance- a necessity, Good manners-morals-values to be imbibed by parents, responsibility- to develop good characteristics in children, help to get educated and assets of the country. Children without loving concerned parents/guardians face problems at a tender age- development is affected-lack in the art of speech- walking-holding things-eating and even doing their everyday basic activity.

Children who are lazy/hesitant - the parents may have to be harsh for the betterment of their life as we see the young seagull in this lesson. As the old proverb says "bend the twig, bend the tree". They may seem cruel and unrelenting but it is for the good of their children. It is the duty of every parent to educate and teach their young ones the art of life.

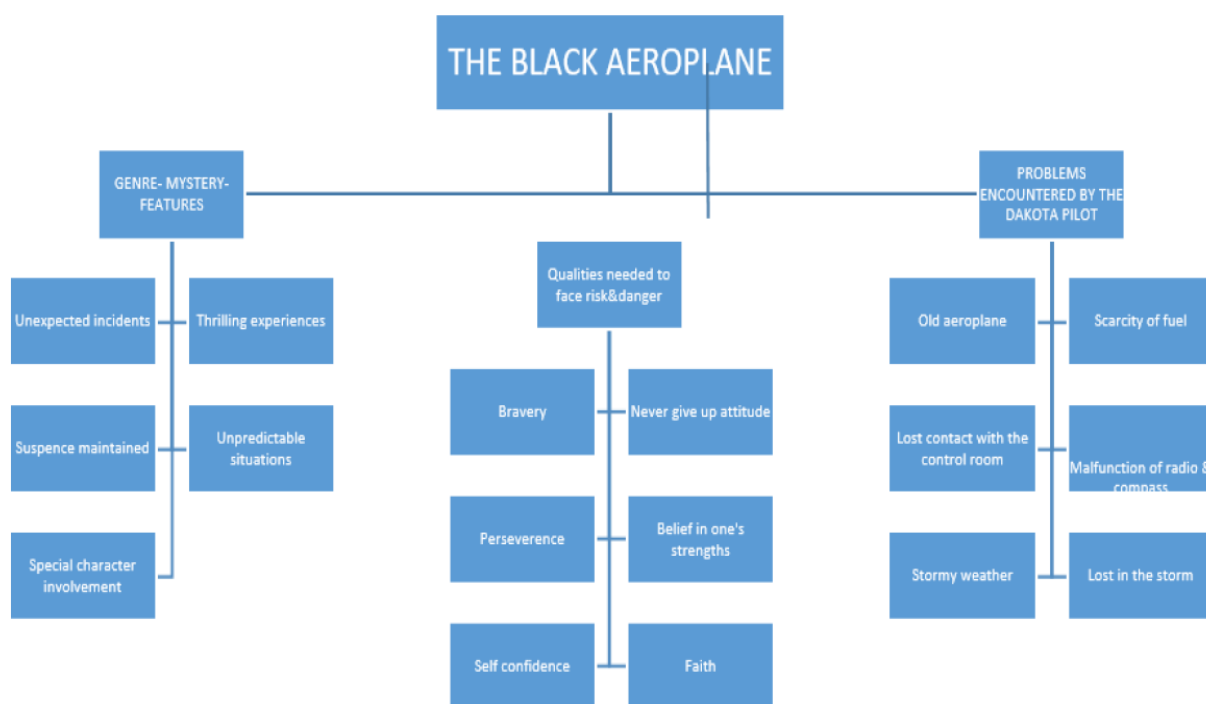
Q.4. "Necessity is the mother of invention." How does this saying stand true in context of the story "His First Flight"?

The saying stands absolutely true in the context of the story. The young seagull learnt the art of flying only after it became necessary for him to satisfy his hunger. Though his parents had tried to motivate and coax him however, he could not overcome his fear of falling down to the sea. As a bird, flying was his natural talent but he was so afraid that he could not discover it. In the end, it was the necessity to get food which made him ignore his fear and dive at the fish that his mother was holding in her beak. He finally achieved success in learning the art of

flying. Again, it was the necessity to save himself from falling into the sea deep below that helped the young seagull to find his potential. Thus, for the young seagull, necessity becomes the mother of an invention. He learns to fly only after overcoming his fear of falling into the great expanse of sea miles beneath his ledge.

Q.5. Compare and contrast the young seagull in the beginning and at the end of the lesson.

In the beginning, the seagull is a coward. He lacks confidence. The time has come when he should fly. His parents try to teach him how to fly. But he is too afraid of the great expanse of the ocean beneath him as well as the steep distance between the cliff and the ocean. Hence, refuses to fly. His parents leave him alone on the ledge. They threaten him that he would starve. His brothers and sister make fun of him. They call him a coward. Even then the seagull does not fly. However, he falls from the rock when he tries to get the fish from his mother. The next moment he flaps his wings and starts flying. Now he is full of confidence. He starts crying with joy. He flies higher and higher. He is no longer afraid. He overcomes his fear of the water also. He finds that he can float on the surface of the sea. His family members praise him and give him pieces of fish to eat. In this way, there is a difference in the behaviour of the seagull at the beginning and end of the story.



SUMMARY- The lesson 'The Black Aeroplane' by Frederick Forsyth is about the experience of a pilot who got caught in a storm. The pilot was on his way to England. He crossed Paris on the way and took help from the Paris control room to help him navigate his way. He was flying an old Dakota aeroplane and was dreaming of a holiday with family. He wanted to have a good English breakfast. As he moved beyond Paris, he came across a huge storm cloud. He decided to take the risk and entered it, thereby getting stuck in it. The compass and the radio stopped working. Suddenly he saw another flight among the black clouds. The pilot of the other plane gestured to follow him. The pilot thus follows the plane to a safe runway. But when he searched for the other pilot to thank him, he was informed that his was the only flight in the sky and that the other plane did not exist.

KEY POINTS

- The clear sky with shining stars
- The author was about to meet his family at breakfast.
- At 1:30 in the morning, author flew in his Dakota aeroplane and he was instructed to turn 12 degrees West by Paris Control.
- He was around 150 kilometres away from Paris.
- The cloud storms approached him.
- He decided to enter the storm.
- A risky decision of the author due to his willingness to see his family.
- He lost the way in the storm.
- All the instruments stopped working.
- A black aeroplane appeared by the author side in the storm.
- He was instructed to follow the black aeroplane.
- Without much fuel he flew for half an hour.
- He landed safely on the runway.
- He went out from his aeroplane to thank the pilot of the black aeroplane.
- Got surprised not to find anyone there in the aeroplane.
- The author asked the woman of Control Tower about the black aeroplane.
- She laughed and replied in negative about such a plane.
- A miracle with no explanation for the author which saved his life.

Read the extracts given below and answer the questions that follow.

1. “The moon was coming up in the east, behind me, and stars were shining in the clear sky above me. There wasn’t a cloud in the sky. I was happy to be alone high up above the sleeping countryside.”

i. Who narrates the above lines?

- A. A bird
- B. The Dakota aeroplane
- C. The pilot of the black aeroplane
- D. The pilot of the Dakota aeroplane

ii) Why was the speaker happy?

- A. He could enjoy the journey with his friends while travelling
- B. He had all facilities to enjoy his free time inside the plane
- C. He could enjoy flying the plane as the surroundings were calm, peaceful and pleasant
- D. He had a rich English breakfast

iii) Which of the following adjectives does not match with the weather conditions being discussed in the above lines?

- A. overcast
- B. cloudless
- C. glorious
- D. gorgeous

iv) The term ‘the sleeping countryside’ suggests that -----.

- A. There was no one in the countryside and it was silent
- B. The countryside was calm and silent as people were sleeping that time
- C. The countrymen used to sleep day and night

- D. The inhabitants had abandoned that place
 v) The story belongs to the genre of -----.
 A. Mystery
 B. Fable
 C. Horror story
 D. Folk tale

i) D. The pilot of the Dakota aeroplane

ii) C. He could enjoy flying the plane as the surroundings were calm, peaceful and pleasant

iii) A. overcast

iv) The countryside was calm and silent as people were sleeping that time

v) A. Mystery

2. The moon was coming up in the east, behind me, and stars were shining in the clear sky above me. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. I was happy to be alone high up above the sleeping countryside. I was flying my old Dakota aeroplane over France back to England. I was dreaming of my holiday and looking forward to being with my family. I looked at my watch: one thirty in the morning. I should call Paris Control soon,' I thought. As I looked down past the nose of the aeroplane, I saw the lights of a big city in front of me.

i) How would you describe the 'risk' the narrator took?

- A. calculated
 B. impetuous
 C. unavoidable
 D. planned

ii) What is the character trait exhibited by the pilot with reference to the extract?

- A. daring
 B. cowardice
 C. covetous
 D. courteous

iii) Read the statements given below and choose the INCORRECT option.

- A. The pilot was dreaming of his holiday and wanted to join his family.
 B. The weather was fine when the pilot started his flight.
 C. The pilot knew that it would be a stormy night before he started the journey.
 D. The family of the pilot lived in England

iv) Select the correct option to fill in the blanks below

risk: risky:: ----- : -----

A. counter: encounter

B. prison: imprison

C. beauty: beautiful

D. cheerful: cheerfully

v) When did the narrator decide to call the Control Room?

- A. 12.30 am
 B. 1.30 am
 C. 1.30 pm
 D. 12.30 pm

i) B. impetuous

ii) A. daring

iii) C. The pilot knew that it would be a stormy night before he started the journey.

iv) C. beauty: beautiful

v) B. 1.30 am

3. “I was safe! I turned to look for my friend in the black aeroplane, but the sky was empty. There was nothing there. The black aeroplane was gone. I could not see it anywhere. I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota near the control tower. I went and asked a woman in the control centre where I was and who the other pilot was. I wanted to say ‘Thank you’. She looked at me very strangely, and then laughed. “Another aeroplane? Up there in this storm? No other aeroplanes were flying tonight. Yours was the only one I could see on the radar.” So, who helped me...”

i) Select the option that correctly tracks the progression of emotions experienced by the narrator in the given extract.

- A. surprised – uncertain – grateful – desperate
- B. relieved – confused – curious – dejected – panic-stricken
- C. optimistic – lonely – calm – elated – sad
- D. excited – reassured– inquisitive – thankful- uncertain

ii) Why do you think the woman in the control centre laughed when the narrator enquired about the other pilot?

- A. She found the narrator funny.
- B. She thought that his question was silly.
- C. She thought he was teasing her.
- D. She was relieved that the narrator was safe.

iii) The narrator exclaimed that he was “safe”. Which of the following acted as threats to the narrator’s safety during the flight?

- A. The black mountain-like storm clouds
- B. The depletion of fuel in the last fuel tank
- C. Being lost due to non-functioning equipment
- D. All of the above

iv) Which of the following statements is only an opinion?

- A. The narrator could land his old plane safely.
- B. The woman in the control centre could see only one plane on the radar.
- C. I think the narrator had imagined that he had been saved by another pilot.
- D. The narrator wanted to thank the other pilot for saving his life.

v) Where was the desired destination of the pilot of the Dakota plane?

- A. England
- B. France
- C. India
- D. Thailand

i) D. excited – reassured– inquisitive – thankful- uncertain

ii) B. She thought that his question was silly

iii) D. All of the above

iv) C. I think the narrator had imagined that he had been saved by another pilot.

v) A. England

4. Everything was going well — it was an easy flight. Paris was about 150 kilometres behind me when I saw the clouds. Storm clouds. They were huge. They looked like black mountains standing in front of me across the sky. I knew I could not fly up and over them, and I did not have enough fuel to fly around them to the north or south. “I ought to go back to Paris,” I thought, but I wanted to get home. I wanted that breakfast. ‘I’ll take the risk,’ I thought and flew that old Dakota straight into the storm.

i. Based on the given extract, choose the option that lists the meme which would be the most appropriate response to “...it was an easy flight”?



(i)



(ii)



(iii)



(iv)

- a) Option (i)
- b) Option (ii)
- c) Option (iii)
- d) Option (iv)

ii How would you describe the “risk” the narrator took?

- a) calculated
- b) impetuous
- c) unavoidable
- d) navigable

iii In what way might the reference to the Dakota as “old” be relevant?

- a) Its antique value made it expensive and precious to the narrator.
- b) It is employed by the narrator as a term of endearment.

- c) It did not have enough fuel to fly around the storm clouds.
- d) Its ability to negotiate the storm clouds might have been suspect.

iv Read the statements given below and then select the option that best describes the given statements.

Statement I – The narrator’s desire to reach home and see his family made him complacent.

Statement II – The narrator was unaware of the threat that the adversarial storm clouds presented.

Statement III – The narrator’s decision making was quick but irresponsible as well as dangerous.

- a) Statement I is False, Statement II is True, Statement III cannot be inferred
- b) Statement I and III are True, Statement II cannot be inferred.
- c) Statement I cannot be inferred, Statement II is False, Statement III is True.
- d) Statement I and II are False, Statement III is True.

v Select the correct option to fill in the blanks below:

risk: risky :: _____ : _____

- a) danger: dangerously

- b) hazard: hazardous
- c) peril: imperilled
- d) caution: precaution

i. – c) Option (iii)

ii – b) impetuous

iii – d) Its ability to negotiate the storm clouds might have been suspect.

iv – c) Statement I cannot be inferred, Statement II is False, Statement III is True.

v – b) hazard: hazardous

5. “He knows that I am lost”, I thought ‘He’s trying to help me.

He turned his aeroplane slowly to the north, in front of my Dakota, so that it would be easier for me to follow him. I was very happy to go behind the strange aeroplane like an obedient child. After half an hour the strange black aeroplane was still there in front of me in the clouds. Now, there was only enough fuel in the old Dakota’s last tank to fly for five or ten minutes more. I was starting to feel frightened again. But then he started to go down and I followed through the storm.

- (a) Why was the pilot happy to find his aeroplane behind another aeroplane in the black clouds?
- (b) Why was the pilot frightened again?
- (c) Find the opposite of ‘insufficient’ from the passage.
- (d) What does a ‘storm’ mean?

(a) The pilot was happy to find his aeroplane behind another aeroplane in the black clouds because another pilot was helping him come out of the storm clouds.

(b) The pilot felt frightened again because the fuel was not sufficient to reach the destination as it was only enough for next five or ten minutes.

(c) Enough.

(d) A storm is a very bad weather with strong winds and rain, thunder and lightning.

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q 1: As a reader, do you feel betrayed or let down in the way the story ends? Validate your opinion.

The story ends with huge suspense about the black aeroplane and its pilot. The author should have given a proper ending to the story. Readers are left to make assumptions about the black aeroplane and its pilot who helped the narrator. Yes, I feel betrayed by the story’s last part.

Q 2: Based on your reading, would you call the narrator a family man? Justify your stance.

It is evident from the story that the narrator took the risk to meet his family. He was excited to stay with them during the vacations. He was eager to join his family at the breakfast table. This shows him to be a family man.

Q 3: James Lane Allen says, “Adversity reveals character”. What do you learn about the narrator from the experience? Mention any two traits.

The stormy night incident proved that the narrator was a **brave man** who did not care about his life.

Q. 4: From the beginning to the end of the lesson the black aeroplane is a mystery. How?

The narrator started his journey with old Dakota – 088. At that time, the sky was clear. But suddenly, he found himself in the midst of black clouds. There was zero visibility, everything was black. He couldn't find any way to escape. All of a sudden, the narrator saw a black aeroplane and was helped by the other pilot. He safely landed at the airport but no one saw the black aeroplane. It remains a mystery till the end.

Q. 5: Describe the narrator's experience as he flew the aeroplane into the storm. Throw a light on his feelings and emotions at that time.

The narrator was in a hurry to reach England although he had little fuel. He felt homesick and missed his home. So, he took the risk to fly on low fuel. Suddenly, he lost contact with Paris due to cloudy storm. Just then a black aeroplane appeared. He was helped by the mysterious pilot and was able to land safely.

Q.6: How did the author come out safely from the black clouds?

The author took the risk of flying through the black clouds. He couldn't see anything. The aeroplane jumped and twisted up every now and then. All his instruments had stopped working. Suddenly, he saw another plane with no lights on its wings. The other pilot gestured him to follow his plane and guided him till they had landed safely out of the clouds.

Q. 7: Why does the narrator say, "I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota..."?

The narrator took the risk of flying straight into the storm clouds. He was lost there. His instrument did not help him as they had stopped functioning. Suddenly he saw a black plane flying near him. The pilot of that plane waved at him and asked him to follow the black plane. The narrator followed him like an obedient child. He landed safely. He was not sorry for the risk he had taken. He had confidence in his old Dakota. He remarked at the end, "I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota..."

Q8. Explain what was crossing the author's mind when he was flying over Paris. Suddenly what happened?

It was very early morning when the author was flying his old Dakota aeroplane over Paris. Everything seemed to be in perfect order specially the weather and the nice thought of a delicious breakfast waiting back home, then meeting his family and also the holiday waiting for him. Even the guidelines by the Paris control room and the Dakota's instruments, fuel tank etc. were in perfect order. But the author's excitement was short lived as soon as the aeroplane entered into a huge black cloud all the instruments stopped working. He was completely taken over by fear and worry.

Q9: Describe the atmosphere when narrator was flying his old Dakota aeroplane over France back to England.

When the narrator was flying his old Dakota aeroplane over France back to England, the moon was coming up in the east, behind him, and stars were shining in the clear sky above him. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. He was happy to be alone high up above the sleeping countryside.

Q10: What are the questions remained unanswered for the narrator?

- i. Who helped him to arrive there safely without a compass or a radio, and without any more fuel in his tanks?

ii. Who was the pilot on the strange black aeroplane, flying in the storm, without lights?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1 Imagine that the narrator shared his story with friends and family once he got home. One of them, a spiritual leader, decided to incorporate the story as part of his weekly sermon to the congregation. Another friend, a psychologist, worked the story into his next lecture on survival instinct and crisis management. Do you think the two interpretations of the story would be different? If so, how? What insights might the narrator get about his mysterious experience, if he were to attend both the sessions?

A spiritual leader would use the story as an example to tell his disciples that God takes care of his children even in extreme conditions. He would preach that God sent an angel to save the narrator. Thus, we should not lose hope and keep trusting God. However, the psychologist friend would describe the incident in a totally different manner. He might say that 'God helps those who help themselves- the mysterious plane was the narrator's soul that drove him out of the storm.

If the narrator happens to listen to both of these workshops he would accept either of the two philosophies as true on the basis of his nature which is not specified in the story. If he is a religious person, he would accept the spiritual friend's opinion. But, he might like to go with the psychologist's interpretation if he is a man of logical thinking.

Q2. How did the writer get out of the storm in the night to land safely?

The writer was flying his old Dakota aeroplane when he saw the black clouds. He was lost in the storm. Suddenly, he saw a black aeroplane by his side, which had no lights on its wings.

The pilot instructed the writer to follow as he had lost the way. He obeyed him like an obedient child. He was very happy to follow him. After some time, the pilot of another plane started to land. The writer followed him blindly through the storm and came out of the clouds. He saw the lights of the runway and landed safely.

Q3. Why was the writer happy when he decided to fly in the night?

The writer was very happy when he decided to fly that night because he was going home to meet his family and to enjoy his holiday. When he started, everything seemed to be perfect. The sky was clear, no clouds could be seen and the stars were shining. It all made it an easy task for the writer to fly that night over the sleeping countryside of Paris. His assumption of everything being in place made him happy.

Q 4. The pilot wanted to thank another pilot after his safe landing. Why? What values of the writer are reflected from his action?

The pilot (writer) of the old Dakota was caught in the storm. He lost his contact with the control room. In this troubling situation, his fuel tank was also empty. He lost all his hopes but suddenly a black strange aeroplane appeared. The pilot of the black aeroplane asked the writer to follow him. The writer landed safely. After his safe landing, he wanted to thank the pilot of the black aeroplane. This shows his gratitude towards the pilot of the Black aeroplane. He was thankful to him for saving his life. It shows that the pilot of Dakota had a value of gratefulness in his character.