

Two Stories about Flying

I. His First Flight

The young seagull called to fly

The young seagull was alone on his ledge. His two brothers and his sister had already flown away. When he wanted to fly, he could not do so. He was very much afraid of flying. Therefore, he failed to gather up the courage to fly. He was really very sad. His father and mother came near him. They called him to fly. They even rebuked him. They threatened that if he did not fly, he would die of hunger there. But he could not even move.

The young seagull can't fly

That was twenty four hours ago. Since then no one had come near him. He had watched his parents, brothers and sister flying. His parents had been perfecting his brothers and sister how to dive for fish on their own. They called him to fly. But he could not.

Heat increases

The sun was rising in the sky. He felt the heat because he had not eaten since the previous nightfall.

Mother reaches near him with food

The seagull closed his eyes standing on one leg. He had the other leg hidden under his wing. He pretended to sleep. But his parents didn't look at him. However, his mother was looking at him. He saw her tear at a piece of fish at her feet. He gave out a sound to get it. His mother replied in a sound and looked at him. His mother picked a piece of the fish. She flew across to him with it. He leaned out tapping the rock with his feet. His mother flew across trying to get nearer to him. The sight of food made him mad as he was very hungry. But he could not get at it.

Dives for food

The seagull waited a moment in surprise. He wondered why his mother did not come nearer. He was so mad with hunger that he dived at the fish. He fell outwards with a scream and downwards into space. His mother had swooped upwards. As he passed beneath her he heard the swish of her wings.

Flight begins

Then a great fear caught him. His heart stood still. He could hear nothing. But it only lasted a moment. The next moment he felt his wings spread outwards. He felt the wind rushed against his breast feathers. Then it rushed under his stomach, and against his wings. He was not falling headlong now. He was soaring slowly downwards and upwards. He was no longer afraid. He could fly on his own.

Joy of flight

The seagull gave out a joyous scream. He soared higher calling 'ga, ga, ga'. His mother gave out 'gaw-col-ah'. Then his father flew over him screaming. Then he saw his brothers and sister flying around him. They were roaring and diving.

The scene around

Then he completely forgot that he had not always been able to fly. He commended himself to dive and soar. He was near the sea now, flying straight over it. He saw a vast green sea beneath him. His parents and his brothers and sister had landed on this green surface of water ahead of him. They were calling him to do the same thing.

Lands on the surface of the water

He dropped his legs to stand on the green sea. But his legs sank into it. He cried with fear. He tried to rise again flapping his wings. But he was tired and weak with hunger. He could not rise. His feet sank into the green sea. His belly touched it. He sank no further. He was floating on it. Around him was his family, crying and praising him. They were offering him scraps of dog-fish. He had made his first flight successfully.

II. The Black Aeroplane

Author flying his Dakota aeroplane

The author says that he was flying an aeroplane at 1 o'clock at night. The moon was coming up in the east behind him. Stars were shining in the clear sky above him. He was flying his old Dakota aeroplane over France back to England. He was dreaming of his holiday. He was looking forward to being with his family at the breakfast table.

Call for Paris Control

He decided to call Paris Control. He then radioed to it. He told it that he was on his way back to England. Paris Control duly acknowledged. It advised him to turn twelve degrees west.

Sees storm clouds

He duly turned to that direction. Everything was going well. Paris was about 150 kilometres behind him. Then he saw the storm clouds. They looked like black mountains in front of him. He knew he could not fly up and over them. He didn't know for a moment what to do.

Great flying problems faced

He decided to go back to Paris. But he also wanted to get home. So he took the risk and flew into the storm. He could see nothing outside his aeroplane. Everything was black. The old aeroplane jumped and twisted in the air. He looked at the compass. It was gone. He tried to contact Paris Control. But he couldn't contact it too. He was lost in the storm.

Another aeroplane in those clouds

Then in the black clouds he saw another aeroplane. It had no lights on its wings. He could see it flying next to him in the storm. He was glad to see another person. He was saying to follow him. The author thought he was trying to help him. So he followed him. He flew for half an hour. He had fuel only to last for five or ten minutes. He began to feel frightened. Then he started to go down.

Saved and lands safely

Suddenly he saw that he was on the runway. He looked for his friend in the black aeroplane. He wanted to thank him. But the sky was empty. He went into the Control Tower. He asked a woman where he was. She looked at him strangely and then she laughed. She told that there was no other aeroplane except his.

Author's great surprise

The author was wonderstruck to hear it. He wondered who had helped him to arrive there. He was without a compass or a radio. He did not have enough fuel also in his tanks. Who was the pilot on the strange black aeroplane flying in the storm without lights ?

NCERT Solutions

I. His First Fight

Thinking about the Text (Page 36)

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 step?

Answer:

The young seagull was afraid to fly because it was his first flight and he feared of falling and hurting himself. He thought that his wings would not support him while flying. Yes, it is natural that doing something for the first time is a bit challenging and fearful. All birds must be afraid to make their first flight.

Similarly, a human baby is also afraid of taking the first step and find it challenging when he learns to crawl or stand up without support.'

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 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 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:

Seagull's parents had tried everything but he was reluctant to fly due to fear of falling down. He looked at his brothers and sister but wouldn't make any efforts. That's why the whole family had left him alone and threatened and cojoleed him to come but every effort went in vain.

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:

(Suggested Answer) Yes, I had a similar experience while learning to ride a bicycle in class VI. In my initial attempts, I fell down everytime and developed a fear of cycling which was difficult to overcome. No amount of provoking and cajoling could let me try it again, but my father encouraged me to overcome the fear and helped me as he was adamant on my learning cycling. He took me on a mound near village and made me sit and asked me to put my hands on the handle and feet on the paddle. It sped down and I enjoyed it without fear which developed my confidence. Thus, I overcame my fear of cycling and started riding a cycle after a few practice

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:

We face some problems in the initial stage while learning new skill. Due to the fear of failure, we hesitate to perform a task or to do something new. In case of the seagull his parents cajoled him to fly. In the example I have given in the answer of previous question, I was cajoled by my father to learn cycling. So, at that stage, I was to learn cycling as it was very important for me to overcome my fear.

Yes, my success was guaranteed because if someone is determined to do something then success is assured. Moreover as said, practice, makes a man perfect.

II. The Black Aeroplane

Thinking about the Text (Page 40)

Question 1.

“I’ll take the risk”. What is the risk? Why does the narrator take it?

Answer:

A huge storm was brewing up and the author was keen to reach his home to spend his holiday with his family. So, he decided to fly through the storm as he did not want to miss the chance to meet his family at breakfast. Thus he took the risk even when the visibility was almost zero in the storm.

Question 2.

Describe the narrator’s experience as he flew the aeroplane into the storm.

Answer:

As the pilot (author) entered the storm, his plane started jumping and twisting. He could not see anything outside the plane as it was black. When he looked at compass and other instruments they had stopped to function due to storm. It was a terrible and fearsome experience for him. The fuel tank was almost empty and he could not fly more than ten minutes. Then he saw another black aeroplane by his side and the pilot of the plane signalled him to follow. It was a surprise for the narrator as the other black plane was having no light. He followed him without any choice and landed safely on the runway.

Question 3.

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

Answer:

Seagull's parents had tried everything but he was reluctant to fly due to fear of falling down. He looked at his brothers and sister but wouldn't make any efforts. That's why the whole family had left him alone and threatened and coaxed him to come but every effort went in vain.

Question 4.

What made the woman in the Control Centre look at the narrator strangely?

Answer:

The woman in the Control Centre looked at the narrator strangely because the narrator asked her about the black aeroplane and she saw no one except the narrator's in the sky during the storm. Even the radar showed only the narrator's plane that night in the sky.

Question 5.

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

Answer:

It is very difficult to say about the unknown pilot who helped the narrator. But probably it was the narrator himself that helped him to overcome the fear in the storm as no other plane was seen in the radar except the narrator's Dakota plane. In that fearsome situation, he might have been hallucinating. He himself was a good pilot and brave enough who helped himself land safely.

Extra Questions

Very Short Answer Type

Question 1.

Why was the young seagull alone?

Answer:

The young seagull was alone because his two brothers and sister had already flown.

Question 2.

Why did he not fly with his brothers and sister?

Answer:

He did not fly because he was afraid.

Question 3.

Where did he sleep that night?

Answer:

He slept in a little hole under the ledge.

Question 4.

Where did young seagull live?

Answer:

The young seagull lived alone on his ledge.

Question 5.

Why was he afraid to fly?

Answer:

He was afraid to fly because his wings would never support him.

Question 6.

What did he see throughout the day?

Answer:

He saw his parents perfecting his brothers and sister in the art of flying.

Question 7.

How did they taunt him?

Answer:

They taunted him with his cowardice.

Question 8.

Who took pity on the young seagull?

Answer:

His mother pitied on the young seagull.

Question 9.

Who had already landed on the green flooring?

Answer:

His parents, brothers and sister had already landed on the green flooring.

Question 10.

How did the family show their happiness for the young seagull?

Answer:

They offered him scraps of dog fish through their beaks.

Short Answer Type

Question 1.

Why was the young seagull afraid to fly?

Answer:

Whenever the young seagull took a little run forward to the extreme edge of the ledge and attempted, to flap his wings, he became afraid. Seeing the vast area of the sea, he thought his wings would never support him.

Question 2.

How were Seagull's parents helping his brothers and sister for "perfecting them in the art of flight"?

Answer:

The young seagull was afraid of flying, but his two brothers and a sister had started flying. But his

parents were teaching them to be perfect in the art of flying. They were teaching them how to skim the waves and how to dive for fish.

Question 3.

'He felt the heat because he had not eaten since the previous nightfall'. What did the young seagull do to satisfy his hunger?

Answer:

The seagull was feeling hungry because he could not fly and his family had left him alone for it. To satisfy his hunger, he was forced to eat whatever he found.

Question 4.

Why- could the young seagull not reach his parents without flying?

Answer:

He could not reach his parents without flying because on each side of him the edge ended in a sheer fall in a verticle cliff, with the sea below. Then, between him and his parents there was a deep and wide crack in the land.

Question 5.

"Still they- took no notice of him." What did the seagull do to draw the attention of his family?

Answer:

The young seagull stepped slowly out to the extreme edge of the ledge. He was standing on one leg with the other leg hidden under his wing. He closed one eye, then the other and pretended to be asleep and they look no notice of him.

Question 6.

What was his family doing on the plateau when seagull failed to draw their attention?

Answer:

The two brothers and the sister of the young seagull were half asleep with their heads sunk into their necks. His father was preening the feathers with his beak on his white back. Only his mother, standing on a little mound on the plateau, was looking at him.

Question 7.

"But he kept calling plaintively, and after a minute or so he uttered a joyful scream." Why did the young seagull utter a joyful scream?

Answer:

The young seagull was desperately hungry. So, he screamed with joy when he saw his mother flying across to him with a piece of fish in her beak. He leaned out eagerly, tapping the rock with his feet trying to get nearer to her.

Question 8.

"Ga, ga, ga," he cried begging her to bring him some food. To whom was the young seagull begging and did she respond?

Answer:

The young seagull was begging his mother to bring some food to him. But his mother's motive was to teach him flying. So, she stopped flying when she reached near him so that he might attempt to fly.

Question 9.

How did the young seagull start flying?

Answer:

The young seagull was 'maddened by hunger' when he dived at the piece of fish in his mother's beak. But he fell outwards and downwards with a loud scream. When his mother swooped upwards, he followed her and thus he started flying.

Question 10.

"He dropped his legs to stand on the green sea." How did his family react when he did so?

Answer:

Being tired and weak with hunger, the young seagull dropped his legs to stand on the green sea. His entire family came around him screaming, praising him and their beaks were offering him scraps of dog-fish.

Question 11.

When did the seagull's flight begin? Where did it end?

Answer:

The seagull's flight began when he moved to the brink of the ledge. He dived at the fish, which was in his mother's beak. His flight ended when, after being tired of his first flight and being weak, he dropped himself on the surface of the sea and floated on it.

Question 12.

How did the seagull get over his fear of the water?

Answer:

After his first flight, the seagull was tired of his strange experience. He dropped his two legs to stand on the green sea. He screamed fearfully and attempted to rise again flapping his wings. He overcame his fear of the water by floating on it.

Question 13.

Do you sympathise with the seagull? Why?

Answer:

We sympathise with the seagull because, due to his fear of flying, he had to remain lonely and hungry, after his family had left him to suffer. He could not muster courage to fly like his brothers and sister.

Question 14.

How did the seagull express his excitement when he saw his mother bringing food for him?

Answer:

The young seagull uttered a joyful scream when he saw his mother picking up a piece of the fish and flying across to him with it. He leaned out eagerly, tapping the rock with his feet.

Question 15.

How did the young seagull's parents teach their children the art of flying?

Answer:

The seagull's parents had taught their children how to skim the waves and how to dive for the fish. They encouraged them raising of loud shrill sound when their older son caught his first herring and ate it greedily.

Long Answer Type

Question 1.

Why was the young seagull left alone in the ledge by his family?

Answer:

The young seagull was afraid to fly. His father and mother wanted him to go and fly with them. But whenever he had taken a little run forward to the extreme edge of the ledge and tried to move his wings he became afraid. He failed to muster up courage to thrust himself forcibly in the space, and started flying.

His two brothers and his sister had the wings shorter than him but they started flying. But the young seagull somehow thought that his wings would not support him for it. For this, he was scolded by his parents, who gave a threat to him and he was left alone in the ledge.

Question 2.

How did the young seagull learn floating on the sea?

Answer:

After flying for sometime, the young seagull came near the sea. He was a flying straight over it. He saw, a vast green sea beneath him, with little ridges moving over it. His brothers and sister had landed on the sea and they were calling in a shrill voice and beckoning to him. He dropped his legs to stand on the green sea. His legs sank into water. He screamed with fright and attempted to rise again flapping his wings.

But he was tired and weak with hunger. He was exhausted due to flying for so long. 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 offering him food from their beaks. This is how he learnt floating on the sea.

Question 3.

How do you find the seagulls in the beginning and at the end of the lesson?

Answer:

In the beginning we find the young seagull too frightened and terrified to fly. He had bigger wings as compared to his two brothers and sister. But still he was afraid even to attempt flying. When they flew away, he could gather courage to thrust himself forcibly in space, which made him scared and desperate.

When he was starving for a day, his mother came across to him with a piece of fish in her beak. When she reached near him, she stopped and 'maddened by hunger,' he dived at the fish. But his mother had swooped upward. He found his wings spread and was more confident now. In the end we see him flying till he was tired and dropped himself on the surface of the sea.

Question 4.

What methods were used by the seagull's family to help him overcome his fear of flying?

Answer:

The young seagull was scared of flying. His brothers and sister had started flying but he could not muster courage to do so. His parents scolded him shrilly and threatened to let him starve on the ledge unless he flew away. When his family left him, he felt the pangs of hunger. Next day, when he

saw his mother with a piece of fish in her beak, he begged her for food. She flew across to him, but halted when the piece of fish in her beak was just within reach of the young seagull. The young seagull dived at the fish, but now her mother swooped upwards. Gradually his fear of flying was over and he enjoyed it now.

Question 5.

The young seagull was “trying to find some means of reaching his parents without having to fly”. Was he successful in doing so?

Answer:

After being left alone by his family, the young seagull was hungry. So he wanted to join his family on the plateau. But he could not do so unless he tried to fly. As he was afraid of flying he was trying to find some other means to reach them. But on each side of him the ledge ended in a steep fall in a vertical cliff, with the sea below.

Moreover, between him and his parents there was a deep and wide crack in the earth. He could reach them without flying if he could only move towards north along with the steep rock. There was no ledge and he could not fly. And above him he could see nothing. The vertical cliff was very steep, and the top of it was perhaps farther away than the sea beneath him. So he was not able to reach them without flying.

Question 6.

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

Answer:

Yes, I do think that hunger played a vital role in the young seagull's attempt to start flying. He was left alone on the ledge by his family because 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. But she stopped when she came opposite to him.

When the young seagull realised that she won'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.

Question 7.

“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.

Answer:

The young seagull was suffering from the pangs of hunger after his family left him. Next day when he saw them on the plateau, he tried to draw their attention. Then his mother flew across to him with a piece of fish in her beak. But she stopped opposite him with her motionless wings. He could no more tolerate the hunger and “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.

Question 8.

Fear and lack of confidence stop one from learning new things. Do you agree? How did these two traits of the young seagull make him coward? How did he overcome these shortcomings.

Answer:

Yes, it is true that fear and lack of confidence stop one from learning new things as in the story, the young seagull lacked the value of courage and confidence in his character. He was too scared of flying.

His family tried hard to make him fly but he refused to do so because of his fear of sinking in the seawater. They even scolded him for his cowardice. They tried to tempt him with food but he was not willing to learn flying. Once he dived, his fear disappeared and he enjoyed his first flight. It is a fact that unless we try for something and overcome our fear, we cannot learn anything. Confidence and motivation are the two most important traits that make any learning possible.

Question 9.

"Hunger made the young seagull mad and gave him success." How can you explain it and justify with the story?

OR

Hunger is a great motivational force. It is true that a person can take any extreme step for food. How far do you agree?

Answer:

It is a fact that hunger makes us mad and every person works for food. It is only hunger that encourages and forces us to do work. If it is not in our life, all the foundation of work will automatically be finished. Every person works for food and to satisfy his hunger. No one in this universe can remain hungry. This hunger makes us work day and night. It can change the mentality of any human being as well as any creature.

We find that young seagull did not gather courage to fly; when he saw fish in the mouth of his mother, he gathered courage and flew over the ledge. He could not control himself at the sight of the food and jumped at the fish. He fell from the ledge and tried to flap his wings. Thus he found himself flying into the air.

Question 10.

"Mother is the first teacher". Do you agree with this statement? Explain with reference to the young seagull.

Answer:

Yes, it is true that mother is the first teacher. It is a well known point for all. A baby takes birth and first of all sees mother's face. It is mother who gives him a new life by feeding him. The mother helps a baby to walk his first step. The mother introduces him to this world, gives him knowledge of relations. She teaches him how to speak. She gives him power and strength to face the difficulties of life.

The same thing we find in this story, when no one could encourage the young seagull to fly, his mother thought out a plan and took a piece of fish near him, but she did not go nearer and her plan worked.

Question 11.

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 he felt that his wings could not support him. Yes, I think that all young birds are afraid to make their first flight. It's new experience for them. However, some of the birds are more timid than others. They take some time to muster the courage to begin their first flight. It is true in case of a human baby also. They find it a challenge to take their first step.

Question 12.

"The sight of the food maddened him." What does this suggest? What compelled the young seagull to finally fly?

Answer:

The sight of the food maddened him. He had been hungry for 24 hours. He was impatient and desperate. He dived at the fish in his mother's beak. She flew upwards. He fell downwards. His wings spread outwards, cutting through the air. Thus began his flight.

Question 13.

"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. He was alone on his ledge. His two brothers and his sister had already flown away the day before. But he was too timid to fly. He felt that his small wings would never support him. His father and mother came around calling to him shrilly. They threatened him to starve on his ledge unless he flew away. They wanted him to take his first flight.

Question 14.

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 group.

Answer:

Group activity.

Question 15.

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:

In the case of bird flying, it seems a natural act, and a foregone conclusion that it should succeed. But in case of learning something, success is never guaranteed. To succeed, one has to put in hard work and continuous practice. When a child learns to step, to run, to speak success is almost guaranteed because these are natural acts but when one learns a skill, it is not a natural act. Success is not guaranteed. One has to try regardless of a possibility of failure.

Reference to Context

Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow:

Question 1.

The young seagull was alone on his ledge. His two brothers and his sister had already flown away the day before. 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. His father and mother had come around calling to him shrilly, upbraiding him, threatening to let him starve on his ledge unless he flew away. But for the life of him he could not move.

- (i) Why was the young seagull alone?
- (ii) Why did he not fly with his brothers and sister?
- (iii) Where did he sleep that night?
- (iv) How did his parents try to make him fly?

Answer:

- (i) The young seagull was alone because his two brothers and sister had already flown away the day before.
- (ii) He did not fly with his brothers and sister because he was afraid.
- (iii) He slept in a little hole under the ledge.
- (iv) They invited him encouragingly. They also threatened him that he would die of hunger if he did not fly.

Question 2.

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 older 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. (Page 33)

- (i) What had happened twenty four hours ago?
- (ii) What did the young seagull watch all day?
- (iii) What did his brothers do?
- (iv) Why did his family taunt the young seagull?

Answer:

- (i) Twenty four hours ago, the young seagull was left alone. His parents, brothers, and sister had flown away.
- (ii) The young seagull watched all day his brother and sister flying over the sea.
- (iii) His brother caught his first fish.
- (iv) His family taunted the young seagull for his cowardice.

Question 3.

The sun was now ascending the sky, blazing on his ledge that faced the south. He felt the heat because he had not eaten since the previous nightfall. He stopped 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. The sight of the food maddened him. How he loved to tear food that way, scrapping his beak now and again to whet it. (Pages 33-34)

- (i) Who was looking at the young seagull?
- (ii) What were his brothers doing?
- (iii) What was the condition of the seagull?
- (iv) What did he like to do?

Answer:

- (i) The mother of the young seagull was looking at him.
- (ii) His brothers were dozing with their heads sunk into their necks.
- (iii) His condition was troubled due to keen hunger.
- (iv) He loved to tear the food and scrape his beak now and then to whet it.

Question 4.

“Ga, ga, ga,” he cried begging her to bring him some food. “Gaw-col-ah,” she screamed back derisively. But he kept calling plaintively, and after a minute or so he uttered a joyful scream. His mother had picked up a piece of the fish and was flying across to him with it. He leaned out eagerly, tapping the rock with his feet, trying to get nearer to her as she flew across. 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. (Pages 34-35)

- (i) What did the young seagull cry for?
- (ii) Did her mother pay attention to his request?
- (iii) Why did the young seagull utter a joyful scream?
- (iv) What was the real intention of the mother?

Answer:

- (i) The young seagull cried for food.
- (ii) No, the mother did not pay attention to his request.
- (iii) When he saw her mother coming towards him with a piece of fish, he uttered a joyful scream.
- (iv) The mother wanted him to fly. She tempted him to dive for the food and fly.

Question 5.

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 headlong now. He was soaring gradually downwards and outwards. He was no longer afraid. He just felt a bit dizzy. (Page 35)

- (i) Why did he fall outward?
- (ii) Did he fly intentionally?
- (iii) What did he feel when he fell into the space?
- (iv) What happened the next moment?

Answer:

- (i) He fell outwards when he tried to snatch food from his mother's beak.
- (ii) No, he did not fly intentionally.

- (iii) When he fell into the space a monstrous terror seized him and his heart stood still.
- (iv) The next moment he felt his wings spread outwards.

Question 6.

Then he flapped his wings once and he soared upwards. "Ga, ga, ga, Ga, ga, ga, Gaw-col-ah," his mother swooped past him, her wings making a loud noise. He answered her with another scream. Then his father flew over him screaming. He saw his two brothers and his sister flying around him curveting and banking and soaring and diving.

Then he completely forgot that he had not always been able to fly, and commended himself to dive and soar and curve, shrieking shrilly.

He was near the sea now, flying straight over it, facing straight out over the ocean. He saw a vast green sea beneath him, with little ridges moving over it and he turned his beak sideways and cawed amusedly.

- (i) How did his mother respond?
- (ii) Why were they happy?
- (iii) What did he forget completely?
- (iv) Why did he commend himself?

Answer:

- (i) His mother uttered Ga, Ga, Ga and flew over him.
- (ii) They were happy because the young seagull had learnt flying.
- (iii) He forgot completely that he was afraid of flying.
- (iv) He commended himself for his ability to fly successfully.

Question 7.

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.

He had made his first flight.

- (i) Where were his parents and brothers?
- (ii) Why did the young seagull scream?
- (iii) What did the young seagull learn?
- (iv) How was he rewarded by his family members?

Answer:

- (i) His parents and brothers had landed on the surface of the sea.
- (ii) The young seagull screamed because he felt himself sinking into the water.
- (iii) The young seagull learnt two things-flying and floating.
- (iv) He was offered scraps of dog fish by the member of his family.

The Black Aeroplane

Very Short Answer Type

Question 1.

Where was the speaker going and how?

Answer:

The speaker was going to England and he was flying his old Dakota aeroplane.

Question 2.

What happened to his aeroplane?

Answer:

His aeroplane twisted and jumped in the air.

Question 3.

What was the advice given to him from Paris Control?

Answer:

Paris Control advised him to turn twelve degrees west.

Question 4.

How did the clouds look?

Answer:

The clouds looked like black mountains.

Question 5.

What was the trouble in flying to the North or South?

Answer:

His Dakota aeroplane was having short fuel.

Question 6.

What was there inside the clouds?

Answer:

Inside the clouds everything was black.

Question 7.

What had happened to other instruments?

Answer:

Others instruments became dead.

Question 8.

How did his compass work?

Answer:

His compass became dead.

Question 9.

What did the speaker see suddenly?

Answer:

The speaker saw suddenly an another aeroplane in the black clouds.

Question 10.

How did the another pilot conduct?

Answer:

The another pilot turned towards him and waved his hand.

Short Answer Type

Question 1.

Describe the author's feeling while he was flying his aeroplane back to England?

Answer:

The author was very excited while he was flying his aeroplane back to England because he wanted to spend his holiday with his family at home.

Question 2.

How much fuel was there in the aeroplane when the writer started flying?

Answer:

There was sufficient fuel in the tanks of the aeroplane to reach England safely when the writer started flying.

Question 3.

What risk did the writer take while flying? Why?

Answer:

The writer decided to risk to fly through the storm clouds because he wanted to enjoy his holiday with his family back in England.

Question 4.

What did the writer feel inside the clouds?

Answer:

When the writer entered the clouds, it became impossible to see outside the aeroplane. The aeroplane jumped and twisted in the air and all the instruments like compass, etc stopped working due to the weather conditions.

Question 5.

What did the writer see inside the black clouds?

Answer:

The writer saw a black aeroplane which had no lights on its wings. The writer could see the face of the pilot in the black clouds who was waving and signalling him to follow to get out of the storm.

Question 6.

Why did the writer follow the pilot of another aeroplane? ‘

Answer:

The writer followed another aeroplane because he had lost the way in the storm and was unable to see anything. The pilot of another aeroplane was helping him to get out of the storm and land safely.

Question 7.

Why did the woman in control room get shocked when the writer asked about another aeroplane?

Answer:

The woman in the control room was shocked when the writer asked about another aeroplane because there was no such plane flying in the sky that night as she saw on the radar.

Question 8.

Why did the writer want to meet the pilot of the black aeroplane?

Answer:

The writer wanted to meet the pilot of the black aeroplane to thank him as he saved his life by helping him to come out from the storm.

Long Answer Type

Question 1.

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

Answer:

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 a 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.

Question 2.

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

Answer:

The writer was very happy when he decided to fly that night because he was going home to his family to – enjoy his holiday. When he started, everything seemed to be perfect. The sky was clear, no clouds could be seen. He was flying back to England in his old Dakota aeroplane over France. He was happy being alone in the sky and was dreaming of his holiday.

Question 3.

‘The Black Aeroplane’ is a mystery Story. Explain.

OR

Do you agree that the story ‘The Black Aeroplane’ is a mystery? Justify your answer with reasons.

Answer:

Yes, ‘The Black Aeroplane’ is a mystery story. The pilot of old Dakota was caught in the storm. He was helpless as his instruments had stopped functioning. He did not know what to do. Suddenly he saw a black Aeroplane flying next to him. It was a strange plane flying in the storm without lights.

The pilot of the black aeroplane helped him in landing safely. On landing he turned back to look for the friend but he had disappeared. The black aeroplane had gone, the lady in control centre told him that he was the only one flying that night. There was no other plane. He could not understand who helped him. It was really a big mystery.

Question 4.

Define the values that reflect from the action of the pilot of old Dakota aeroplane when he wanted to

thank the pilot of the Black aeroplane.

OR

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

Answer:

The pilot 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 plane appeared.

The pilot of the black plane asked the writer to follow him. The writer landed safely. After his safe landing, he wanted to thank the pilot of black plane. This shows his gratitude towards the pilot of black plane. He was thankful to him for saving his life. It shows that the pilot of Dakota had a value of gratefulness

Thinking about the Text

Question 1.

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

Answer:

The narrator was on his way to England. Paris was about 150 kilometres when he saw storm clouds. He could not fly up and over them. He did not have enough fuel to fly around them. He ought to go back to Paris. But he took the risk of flying straight into the storm because he wanted to get home and have a good breakfast with his family.

Question 2.

Describe the narrator's experience as he flew the aeroplane into them.

Answer:

The narrator saw huge black storm clouds. He took the risk and flew straight into them. Inside the clouds everything suddenly went black. He could not see anything outside the plane. His plane was jumping and twisting in the clouds. The compass was dead. Other Instruments also stopped functioning. The narrator was lost in the storm clouds.

Question 3.

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

Answer:

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..."

Question 4.

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

Answer:

The narrator was helped by the pilot of the black plane in safe landing. He wanted to thank him. He went to the woman in the control room and asked about the pilot of another plane. She looked at him

strangely and told him that there was no other plane flying that night. His was the only plane that could be seen 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:

The narrator was lost in the storm. His plane's instruments had stopped functioning. He was scared. Suddenly, a strange black plane appeared near him. He was happy to see the plane. The pilot of the second plane waved his hand and asked him to follow him. He helped the narrator in landing safely. After his safe landing the narrator wanted to thank the second pilot. He was told by the woman at control centre that his was the only plane flying in the sky that night. There was no other plane or pilot.

He was surprised. He could not understand who the pilot was on the strange plane. It was a mystery. Perhaps it was his imagination only. But the question arises if it was his imagination then how could he land safely without a compass and other instruments! I think it was his third sense that helped him. Sometimes it happens that when our active senses do not work, our latent power helps us. I think, it was his latent power which created an imaginary plane and pilot to help him in landing safely

Reference to Context

Read the following passages and answer the questions that follow:

Question 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 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) Who is 'Me' and T in the passage?
- (ii) What does he mean by "the clear sky"?
- (iii) What was he dreaming about?
- (iv) Where was he flying the old Dakota?

Answer:

- (i) 'Me' and 'I' refer to the pilot flying the Dakota Aeroplane, who is the author himself.
- (ii) By clear sky, he means that the stars were shining and there were no clouds in the sky.
- (iii) He was dreaming about his pleasant holiday and how he will be with his family soon.
- (iv) He was flying the old Dakota over France back to England.

Question 2.

'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 switched on the radio and said, "Paris Control, Dakota DS 088 here. Can you hear me? I'm on my way to England. Over." The Voice from the radio answered me immediately: "DS 088, I can hear you. You ought to turn twelve degrees west now, DS 088. Over." I checked the map and the compass, switched over to my second and last fuel tank, and turned the Dakota twelve degrees west towards England.

- (i) Why did he make a call to Paris Control room?

- (ii) What advice did he get from the Control room?
- (iii) How many fuel tanks were there in his plane?
- (iv) What did he see in front of him?

Answer:

- (i) He made a call to Paris Control room to inform about his flight.
- (ii) The Control room advised him to turn twelve degrees west.
- (iii) He had two fuel tanks in his aeroplane.
- (iv) He saw the light of a big city in front of him.

Question 3.

'I'll be in time for breakfast, 'I thought. A good big English breakfast! 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. Til take the risk,' I thought, and flew that old Dakota straight into the storm.

- (i) Why did he call it 'an easy flight'?
- (ii) What was he thinking?
- (iii) What did he see suddenly in front of him?
- (iv) Pick out a word from the passage which means 'Strong Wind'.

Answer:

- (i) He called it an easy flight because it was a clear sky and there was no disturbance. Everything was going well.
- (ii) He was thinking that he would reach his home in time and get a rich breakfast.
- (iii) Suddenly, he saw huge storm clouds in front of him. They looked like a black mountain.
- (iv) Storm.

Question 4.

Inside the clouds, everything was suddenly black. It was impossible to see anything outside the aeroplane. The old aeroplane jumped and twisted in the air. I looked at the compass. I couldn't believe my eyes: the compass was turning round and round. It was dead. It would not work! The other instruments were suddenly dead, too. I tried the radio. "Paris Control? Paris Control? Can you hear me?" There was no answer. The radio was dead too. I had no radio, no compass, and I could not see where I was. I was lost in the storm.

- (i) What was it like inside the clouds?
- (ii) Was the plane flying smoothly?
- (iii) Why could he not contact the Paris Control?
- (iv) Pick out a word from the passage which means 'turned'.

Answer:

- (i) Inside the clouds it was blackness and it was not possible to see anything outside the plane.
- (ii) No, the plane was jumping and twisting in the air.
- (iii) He could not contact the Paris Control because the compass was not working and radio was dead.
- (iv) Twisted.

Question 5.

Then, in the black clouds quite near me, I saw another aeroplane. It had no lights on its wings, but I could see it flying next to me through the storm. I could see the pilot's face—turned towards me. I was very glad to see another person. He lifted one hand and waved. "Follow me," he was saying.

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

- (i) What did he see in the black clouds?
- (ii) What was strange about the second plane?
- (iii) What did the pilot of the other plane indicate?
- (iv) What did the narrator think about the pilot of the other plane?

Answer:

- (i) He saw another aeroplane in the black clouds. ‘
- (ii) The second aeroplane had no lights on its wings.
- (iii) The pilot of the other plane waved and indicated the narrator to follow him.
- (iv) The narrator thought that the pilot of the other plane wanted to help him.

Question 6.

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.

- (i) Why did he turn his aeroplane?
- (ii) How did the author behave?
- (iii) How much fuel was left in his plane?
- (iv) Pick out a word from the passage which means the same as ‘submissive’.

Answer:

- (i) He turned his aeroplane slowly to the north so that the author might follow him easily.
- (ii) The author behaved as an obedient child.
- (iii) There was only enough fuel to fly for five or ten minutes more.
- (iv) Obedient.

Question 7.

Suddenly I came out of the clouds and saw two long straight lines of lights in front of me. It was a runway! An airport! 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’.

- (i) What did the narrator see after coming out of the clouds?
- (ii) What is a runway?
- (iii) Why did he turn back?
- (iv) Whom did he want to thank and why?

Answer:

- (i) After coming out of the clouds, the narrator saw two straight lines of lights which was a runway.
- (ii) A runway is a track of landing and taking off for aeroplane.
- (iii) He turned back to see his friend in the black aeroplane who had guided him in landing safely.
- (iv) He wanted to thank the pilot of another plane who had helped him in landing safely.