

Learning Horizon

Class 9th

BEEHIVE

Subject : English

Prose

Chapter: The Little Girl

Chapter: The Little Girl

Author: Katherine Mansfield

Theme: Childhood fear, misunderstanding, parent-child relationship

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. Why was Kezia afraid of her father?

Answer:

Kezia was afraid of her father because he was strict, spoke harshly, and never played with her. His presence intimidated her, and she felt uncomfortable and nervous around him.

2. What did Kezia's grandmother suggest she do for her father's birthday?

Answer:

Her grandmother suggested that Kezia make a pin-cushion as a birthday gift for her father. She wanted Kezia to express love through a handmade present.

3. Why did Kezia's efforts to surprise her father with a gift go wrong?

Answer:

Kezia unknowingly tore up important papers from her father's desk to stuff the pin-cushion. Her father was furious, and she was punished for the mistake, even though her intentions were good.

4. What made Kezia change her opinion about her father?

Answer:

One night, when her mother was ill and Kezia was frightened during a storm, her father comforted her by taking her in his arms and putting her to sleep. This loving gesture changed her perception of him.

B. Long Answer Questions (100–150 words)

1. Describe the relationship between Kezia and her father. How does it evolve?

Answer:

At first, Kezia's relationship with her father is distant and full of fear. She finds him strict, authoritative, and unapproachable. She is scared of speaking to him and avoids being around him. However, after the incident where he comforts her during a storm, she realizes that her father, despite his stern behavior, loves her deeply. The story highlights how children can misunderstand their parents' strictness as lack of love. By the end, Kezia learns that her father's way of showing care is different and begins to see him as a protective figure.

2. How does the story "The Little Girl" portray the emotional needs of children?

Answer:

The story emphasizes that children need warmth, affection, and open communication with their parents. Kezia's fear and confusion result from the lack of emotional closeness with her father. Although her father provides for her materially, he does not express his love in ways Kezia can understand. It is only when he holds her during a thunderstorm that she feels safe and loved. The story suggests that emotional bonding is just as important as discipline in parenting.

C. Extract-Based Questions

Extract:

"But it was for her father's birthday, and she was glad to do something for him, especially since he was to be away for a day or two, it seemed an ideal opportunity."

Q1: Why did Kezia think this was an ideal opportunity?

Answer: Because her father was away, she could make the surprise gift without him finding out.

Q2: What does this show about Kezia's feelings toward her father?

Answer: It shows she genuinely wanted to please her father and make him happy, despite being afraid of him.

Extract:

"What did God make fathers for?" she sobbed."

Q1: Why does Kezia say this?

Answer: She says this out of frustration and pain after being punished by her father for a mistake she didn't understand.

Q2: What does it tell us about Kezia's emotional state?

Answer: She feels unloved, confused, and misunderstood. It shows the emotional distance between her and her father.

D. Value-Based Question

Q: What lesson does the story "The Little Girl" teach about parenting?

Answer:

The story teaches that parents must balance discipline with emotional warmth. Children may misinterpret strictness as a lack of love. Communication, affection, and spending time with children are essential for nurturing a healthy relationship.

Chapter: A Truly Beautiful Mind

Chapter: A Truly Beautiful Mind

About: A biographical account of **Albert Einstein**

Theme: Human side of a genius — combining intelligence with humanity

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. Why is the title "A Truly Beautiful Mind" appropriate for this chapter?

Answer:

The title is appropriate because it highlights not just Einstein's brilliance in science, but also his deep concern for humanity, peace, and equality. He was not only a genius but also a compassionate person who used his influence for noble causes.

2. What unusual qualities did Einstein show as a child?

Answer:

Einstein was different from other children. He spoke very little as a child and was considered strange by others. He had a deep and questioning mind, and he showed great interest in mathematics and science from a very early age.

3. Why did Einstein leave school in Munich?

Answer:

Einstein left his school in Munich because he did not like the rigid discipline and rote learning. He felt stifled and unappreciated, so he dropped out at the age of 15.

4. What was Einstein's contribution to science?

Answer:

Einstein developed the **Special Theory of Relativity**, introducing the famous equation $E = mc^2$. He also made important contributions to quantum physics and won the **Nobel Prize in Physics** in 1921.

5. Why did Einstein emigrate to the USA?

Answer:

Einstein emigrated to the USA in 1933 to escape the **Nazi regime** in Germany, which had come to power and was hostile to Jews. As a Jew, Einstein felt unsafe and left for a more peaceful and tolerant country.

B. Long Answer Questions (100–150 words)

1. Describe Einstein's journey from a curious child to a world-famous scientist.

Answer:

Albert Einstein was not a typical child. He spoke late and was considered strange. However, he was deeply curious and had a sharp mind. He loved mathematics and science, and his school life in Munich did not suit him, so he left. He continued his education in Switzerland and later took up a job at the patent office. During his spare time, he developed the **Special Theory of Relativity**, which revolutionized physics. Einstein's fame grew rapidly, and he was awarded the **Nobel Prize** in 1921. Despite his achievements, he remained humble and used his voice to speak out against war and support human rights. His life shows how intelligence combined with compassion creates a "truly beautiful mind."

2. How did Einstein balance his scientific career with his social concerns?

Answer:

Einstein did not confine himself to science alone. He was deeply affected by the political events of his time. He opposed the Nazi regime, supported civil rights in America, and was a strong advocate of world peace. After the atomic bomb was dropped on Japan, Einstein was deeply disturbed, even though his equation ($E=mc^2$) had indirectly contributed to it. He later wrote to the U.S. President urging for nuclear disarmament. This shows that Einstein was not just a scientist, but a responsible global citizen who used his influence to promote peace and justice.

C. Extract-Based Questions

Extract:

"He had a special interest in mathematics and physics, and after finishing school, he decided to study at a university in Zurich."

Q1: What subjects did Einstein prefer?

Answer: Mathematics and Physics

Q2: Where did Einstein pursue higher education?

Answer: At a university in Zurich, Switzerland

Extract:

"The Nazis had come to power and Einstein had to leave. He emigrated to the United States."

Q1: Why did Einstein leave Germany?

Answer: He left because the Nazis, who were anti-Semitic, had come to power and he was Jewish.

Q2: What does this tell us about the political climate in Germany at that time?

Answer: It was hostile, oppressive, and dangerous for Jews and free-thinking individuals.

D. Value-Based Question

Q: What values and qualities made Einstein "a truly beautiful mind"?

Answer:

Einstein's greatness was not just in his intelligence, but in his humility, sense of justice, and compassion. He supported world peace, fought against racial discrimination, and opposed the misuse of science for destructive purposes. These values make him an inspiration for both scientists and humanitarians.

Chapter: The Snake and the Mirror

Chapter: The Snake and the Mirror

Author: Vaikom Muhammad Basheer

Type: Short story, first-person narrative

Theme: Irony, humor, fear, self-reflection, and human ego

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. Who is the narrator of the story "The Snake and the Mirror"?

Answer:

The narrator is a homeopathic doctor who recounts a terrifying yet humorous experience from his youth when he encountered a snake in his room.

2. What was the doctor doing when the snake entered the room?

Answer:

The doctor was admiring himself in the mirror and thinking about his appearance, his future, and how he could improve his looks and impress others—especially women.

3. How did the narrator react when the snake landed on his shoulder?

Answer:

He froze completely, filled with terror. He remained still, fearing that any movement might provoke the snake to bite him.

4. What ironic contrast is shown in the doctor's thoughts before and after the snake appeared?

Answer:

Before the snake appeared, the doctor was full of vanity, thinking about his beauty, future wife, and even admiring himself. After the snake appeared, all his pride disappeared, and he started praying and thinking only of survival.

5. What did the snake do after landing on the doctor's shoulder?

Answer:

Instead of harming the doctor, the snake slithered down, coiled around his arm, and eventually became interested in its reflection in the mirror.

B. Long Answer Questions (100–150 words)

1. Describe the humorous and ironic elements in "The Snake and the Mirror."

Answer:

The story is rich in irony and humor. The narrator begins with humorous self-admiration, planning to grow a moustache and look more handsome. He dreams of marrying a rich, fat woman who wouldn't chase him if he made a mistake. The irony deepens when a snake lands on him, and all his pride vanishes. The same man who admired himself in the mirror and planned his romantic future starts praying for his life. The ultimate irony is when the snake, too, seems to admire itself in the mirror, just as the doctor did earlier. The humorous tone is sustained by the narrator's exaggerated reactions and his witty retelling of a genuinely terrifying event.

2. What does the story reveal about the narrator's character?

Answer:

The narrator comes across as vain, immature, and slightly narcissistic at the beginning. He is concerned about his looks, romanticizes his future, and is proud of being a doctor. However, his fear during the snake incident shows how fragile and human he really is. The experience humbles him. His storytelling style is light-hearted and humorous, showing that he can laugh at himself in hindsight. He is reflective and self-aware, which makes his narration engaging and relatable.

C. Extract-Based Questions

Extract:

"I looked into the mirror and smiled. It was an attractive smile. I made another earth-shaking decision—I would shave daily and grow a thin moustache to look more handsome."

Q1: What does this reveal about the narrator's personality?

Answer: He is vain and self-obsessed, imagining himself as attractive and trying to enhance his looks.

Q2: What does the term "earth-shaking decision" suggest here?

Answer: It is used humorously to exaggerate a trivial decision, showing the narrator's inflated self-importance.

Extract:

"The snake looked into the mirror. It looked again. It was as though it was admiring its reflection."

Q1: What is the significance of this moment in the story?

Answer: It mirrors the earlier scene where the doctor admired himself, creating irony and humor.

Q2: What human trait is being reflected through the snake's action?

Answer: Vanity. Just like the doctor, the snake appears to be fascinated by its own image.

D. Value-Based Question

Q: What message does "The Snake and the Mirror" convey about human nature?

Answer:

The story conveys that human beings are often vain and proud of their intelligence or appearance, but in a moment of real danger, all that pride fades away. It also shows the need for humility. The doctor's transformation from a proud man to a terrified one is a reminder that life is unpredictable and ego is fragile.

Chapter : My Childhood

Author: Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (an extract from his autobiography Wings of Fire)

Theme: Early life, values, humility, communal harmony, and personal growth

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. Where was Abdul Kalam born, and what was his family background?

Answer:

Abdul Kalam was born in Rameswaram, a town in Tamil Nadu, in a middle-class Muslim family. His father, Jainulabdeen, was not formally educated but was a wise and generous man. His mother, Ashiamma, was kind and fed many people daily.

2. What values did Abdul Kalam inherit from his parents?

Answer:

He inherited honesty, self-discipline, kindness, and respect for all religions. His father taught him simplicity and spiritual strength, while his mother showed him compassion and generosity.

3. Who was Kalam's close friend in his childhood, and what religion did he belong to?

Answer:

*His close friend was **Ramanadha Sastry**, a Hindu boy. Their friendship reflected communal harmony, as they respected each other's faiths despite coming from different religions.*

4. What incident made Kalam feel the impact of religious discrimination?

Answer:

In class, when Kalam sat beside Ramanadha Sastry, the teacher scolded him for sitting with a Hindu boy and asked him to move to the back. This made him feel the sting of religious prejudice for the first time.

5. How did Kalam's science teacher influence him?

Answer:

*His science teacher, **Sivasubramania Iyer**, encouraged Kalam's scientific curiosity and treated him equally despite religious differences. He even invited Kalam to dine in his home to break caste barriers, setting an example of social reform.*

B. Long Answer Questions (100–150 words)

1. Describe the key influences in Kalam's childhood that shaped his character and thinking.

Answer:

Abdul Kalam's early life in Rameswaram was shaped by strong family values, a spiritual environment, and communal harmony. His father's honesty and spiritual outlook taught him simplicity and strength. His mother's kindness inspired compassion. His friendship with Hindu boys like Ramanadha Sastry showed the unity in diversity.

that India represents. Two key incidents influenced him deeply—being discriminated against by a teacher and being welcomed by another who believed in equality. His science teacher Sivasubramania Iyer challenged caste norms by inviting Kalam to dine at his home. These experiences taught Kalam to value education, respect all religions, and fight discrimination. They laid the foundation for the great visionary and leader he would become.

2. What message does the lesson “My Childhood” convey to students?

Answer:

The lesson conveys powerful messages: that our early experiences shape who we become, and that values like tolerance, respect, and humility are crucial. It encourages students to rise above prejudice and work toward harmony. The story of Kalam’s life shows how greatness begins in small acts—family love, friendship, and a desire to learn. His humble beginnings did not limit his dreams. The lesson inspires students to believe in education, maintain a positive attitude, and be rooted in good values.

C. Extract-Based Questions

Extract:

"My austere father used to avoid all inessential comforts and luxuries."

Q1: What does “austere” mean in this context?

Answer: It means simple, disciplined, and not indulgent in material comforts.

Q2: What does this line tell you about Kalam’s father?

Answer: He was a man of self-discipline who lived a simple life and focused on spiritual and moral values.

Extract:

"He did not believe in wasting money on luxuries or comforts."

Q1: Who is being referred to here?

Answer: Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam’s father, Jainulabdeen.

Q2: What quality of character is highlighted in this line?

Answer: Simplicity and wisdom; he believed in living a life of purpose, not luxury.

D. Value-Based Question

Q: How does “My Childhood” reflect the value of communal harmony and tolerance?

Answer:

The story highlights that people of different religions can live together peacefully, as seen in Kalam’s friendship with Hindu boys. Despite religious differences, they respected each other. His science teacher’s progressive thinking also promoted religious tolerance. The story shows that real education and development come from unity and respect, not division.

Chapter : Reach for the Top

Chapter : Reach for the Top

- **Part I:** Santosh Yadav (Mountaineer)
- **Part II:** Maria Sharapova (Tennis Champion)

Theme: Determination, perseverance, breaking stereotypes, rising above odds

Part I: Santosh Yadav

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. Who is Santosh Yadav, and what is she known for?

Answer:

Santosh Yadav is the first woman in the world to climb **Mount Everest twice**. She is an Indian mountaineer who has shown exceptional courage, determination, and strength.

2. How was Santosh different from other girls of her village?

Answer:

Unlike other girls, Santosh wore shorts instead of traditional clothes and questioned social customs. She was independent, strong-willed, and aimed to chart her own path.

3. What were the circumstances that led Santosh to choose mountaineering?

Answer:

While staying in a hostel in Delhi, she saw climbers practicing on the Aravalli hills. Fascinated, she joined them and discovered her passion. She later joined the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering.

4. How did her family react to her decision to become a mountaineer?

Answer:

Initially, her family resisted her decision as mountaineering was not considered suitable for girls. But her determination eventually won their support.

5. How did Santosh help a fellow climber on one of her expeditions?

Answer:

During an Everest expedition, Santosh **saved the life of a fellow climber** by sharing oxygen and bringing him down safely, showing her courage and humanity.

B. Long Answer Question

1. What qualities of Santosh Yadav helped her reach the top of the world?

Answer:

Santosh was courageous, determined, and goal-oriented. She defied social norms, pursued higher education against her family's wishes, and followed her passion for mountaineering. She showed leadership and compassion, even saving lives during expeditions. Her achievements prove that women can excel in any field if they are committed. She serves as a role model for youth, especially girls.

Part II: Maria Sharapova

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. Who is Maria Sharapova, and what is her major achievement?

Answer:

Maria Sharapova is a Russian tennis player who became the **world number one** at the age of 18. She won her first Grand Slam at Wimbledon in 2004.

2. What sacrifices did Maria make to reach the top?

Answer:

Maria left home at the age of 9 to train in the U.S. She lived away from her family, faced loneliness, and endured bullying from older players. Her strong mental toughness helped her survive and succeed.

3. What does Maria say about her Russian identity?

Answer:

Though she trained in the U.S., Maria is proud to be Russian and says her heart remains with Russia.

4. How does Maria describe her journey to success?

Answer:

She describes it as tough and lonely. She had to face many emotional challenges, but she remained focused, determined, and never let hardships break her spirit.

B. Long Answer Question

1. How did Maria Sharapova's hard work and mental toughness contribute to her success?

Answer:

Maria Sharapova's rise to the top was not easy. She trained in the U.S. from a very young age, away from her parents. She faced hardships, including homesickness and bullying. But she remained mentally strong and focused on her goal. She never let distractions take her away from her dream. Her fierce determination and willingness to sacrifice comforts led her to become a world tennis champion. Her journey shows that success requires more than talent—it needs willpower and endurance.

Extract-Based Questions

Extract (Part I – Santosh Yadav):

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

Q1: What does this reflect about Santosh's character?

Answer: Her confidence, independence, and courage to challenge societal norms.

Q2: What is meant by 'rational path'?

Answer: A path based on logic, reason, and self-belief, not blind tradition.

Extract (Part II – Maria Sharapova):

"I work hard at what I do. It's my job."

Q1: What attitude of Maria does this line show?

Answer: It shows her professionalism, discipline, and no-nonsense attitude towards her career.

Q2: What message does this give to young athletes?

Answer: Success demands hard work, dedication, and consistent effort.

C. Value-Based Question

Q: What common traits do Santosh Yadav and Maria Sharapova share?

Answer:

Both women are fiercely determined, hardworking, and goal-oriented. They overcame personal, cultural, and emotional challenges to succeed. Their stories inspire self-belief, the importance of perseverance, and breaking gender stereotypes. They show that reaching the top requires focus, courage, and resilience.

Chapter : Kathmandu

Chapter 8: Kathmandu

Author: Vikram Seth

Type: Travel memoir (from his book *Heaven Lake*)

Theme: Travel, observation, contrast of cultures, inner peace

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. What two temples did the author visit in Kathmandu?

Answer:

*The author visited the **Pashupatinath Temple**, a sacred Hindu shrine, and the **Baudhnath Stupa**, an important Buddhist site in Kathmandu.*

2. How is the atmosphere at Pashupatinath Temple described?

Answer:

Pashupatinath is chaotic and noisy, filled with chanting, priests, pilgrims, vendors, and beggars. There's a sense of crowd, confusion, and tension, even conflict.

3. How does the author describe Baudhnath Stupa in contrast to Pashupatinath?

Answer:

Baudhnath is calm, quiet, and peaceful. The author describes it as serene, with a sense of stillness and devotion that contrasts sharply with the frenzy at Pashupatinath.

4. What kind of shops and signs does the author see on the streets of Kathmandu?

Answer:

The streets are lined with shops selling Western and local items like chocolates, cameras, and religious goods. There are humorous and strange signs, like "DO NOT ENTER – TALKING IS ALLOWED."

5. What does the author do after visiting the temples?

Answer:

He wanders the streets of Kathmandu, buys chocolates, comics, and a bar of marzipan, listens to flute music, and eventually feels homesick, longing to return to familiar surroundings in India.

B. Long Answer Question (100–150 words)

1. Compare the atmosphere of the two religious sites described by Vikram Seth in Kathmandu.

Answer:

The author presents a vivid contrast between the two shrines. **Pashupatinath Temple** is bustling and chaotic, filled with sadhus, worshippers, chanting, and even tension—like people pushing each other for darshan or disputes over entry rights. There's a sense of noise and unrest. In contrast, **Baudhnath Stupa** is peaceful and still. It has a tranquil, meditative atmosphere, with quiet devotees walking around in a clockwise direction. The environment invites introspection. This contrast highlights the diversity of religious expressions and the different ways people seek spiritual connection. Through this comparison, Vikram Seth shows how the same city can offer different experiences depending on where you are and what you're seeking.

2. What is the significance of the flute in the chapter?

Answer:

The sound of the flute creates a deep emotional moment for the author. As he listens, he reflects on the universality of music and its ability to transcend barriers. It reminds him of his home, people, and shared human emotions. The flute becomes a symbol of peace and inner harmony, contrasting with the external chaos he witnessed. It triggers his longing for India and brings a sense of calm and connection to something familiar. This ending gives the chapter a lyrical, reflective tone.

C. Extract-Based Questions

Extract:

"A royal Nepalese princess, a few days ago, was escorted to the temple by the police. Because she was a woman, she was not allowed to enter the temple."

Q1: Which temple is being described?

Answer: Pashupatinath Temple.

Q2: What does this incident reveal about the rules at the temple?

Answer: It shows that there are strict traditional and gender-based restrictions, even for royalty.

Extract:

"The flute seller has a pole with fifty or sixty flutes protruding in all directions like the quills of a porcupine."

Q1: Who is described in this line?

Answer: A flute seller in Kathmandu.

Q2: What literary device is used here and why?

Answer: A **simile** — the flutes are compared to porcupine quills to create a vivid visual image.

D. Value-Based Question

Q: What does the chapter "Kathmandu" teach us about observing and appreciating different cultures?

Answer:

The chapter shows the importance of observing with sensitivity and without judgment. Vikram Seth experiences both chaos and peace, but he appreciates the richness of Kathmandu's spiritual life. He observes cultural differences and sees beauty in both the disorder and the calm. The chapter teaches us to respect diverse traditions, reflect on our own inner world, and find peace even in unfamiliar places.

Chapter : If I Were You

Chapter 9: If I Were You

Author: Douglas James

Type: One-act play

Theme: Quick wit, mistaken identity, courage

A. Short Answer Questions (30–50 words)

1. Who are the two main characters in the play?

Answer:

The two main characters are **Gerrard**, a playwright, and a **thief** who breaks into his house.

2. What was Gerrard doing when the thief entered his house?

Answer:

Gerrard was sitting at his desk, writing a play when the thief entered.

3. How does Gerrard react to the thief's presence?

Answer:

Gerrard remains calm and clever. Instead of panicking, he pretends to be someone else to confuse the thief.

4. What false identity does Gerrard assume?

Answer:

He pretends to be a detective who is already aware of the thief's plans.

5. How does Gerrard manage to scare the thief away?

Answer:

By acting confident and threatening to catch him, Gerrard intimidates the thief, who eventually flees the scene.

B. Long Answer Questions (100–150 words)

1. Describe how Gerrard uses his wit to handle the thief's intrusion.

Answer:

Gerrard cleverly uses his quick thinking to confuse and scare the thief. Instead of reacting with fear, he remains composed and pretends to be a detective who has been watching the thief. He accuses the thief of being a criminal, acting as if he has evidence against him. This sudden change in behavior surprises the thief, who begins to doubt himself and feels trapped. Gerrard's calm and intelligent approach turns the tables, making the thief nervous enough to escape without harming anyone. This shows the power of wit and courage in difficult situations.

2. What message does the play "If I Were You" convey?

Answer:

The play emphasizes the importance of staying calm and using intelligence during a crisis. It teaches that courage and quick thinking can help overcome danger. Instead of being scared, one can use wit to handle challenging situations. The play also highlights that appearances can be deceiving, and one should not underestimate the power of the mind.

C. Extract-Based Questions

Extract:

"If I were you, I would not do this thing."

Q1: Who says this line and to whom?

Answer: Gerrard says this line to the thief.

Q2: What does this line reveal about Gerrard's attitude?

Answer: It shows that Gerrard is confident and trying to intimidate the thief with his calm and assertive manner.

Extract:

"You won't be able to get away with this. I know all about you."

Q1: What is Gerrard trying to do by saying this?

Answer: He is trying to scare the thief by pretending he has information and is a detective.

Q2: How does this affect the thief?

Answer: The thief becomes nervous and unsure, which eventually leads him to flee.

D. Value-Based Question

Q: What important qualities are highlighted in the play that help Gerrard face the thief?

Answer:

The play highlights qualities like calmness, courage, intelligence, and quick wit. Instead of panicking, Gerrard stays composed and uses his mind to outsmart the thief. These qualities teach us that staying calm and thinking clearly can help solve difficult problems.

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