

Chapter 3 (Part-I)

His First Flight

(Solution)



Thinking about the text (Page-36)

Q 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 steps?

Ans: The young seagull was afraid to fly because it was his first flight. As we all know that the first attempt for any work is always challenging. Therefore, all young birds may feel afraid to make their first flights. Similarly, a human baby would also find it a challenge to take its first step.

Q 2. “The sight of the food maddened him.” What does this suggest? What compelled the young seagull to finally fly?

Ans: The young seagull was very hungry. It was his hunger that ultimately compelled him to fly. When the young seagull saw his mother tearing at a piece of fish that lay at her feet. He cried to her, begging her to get some food. When his mother came towards him with food in her beak, he screamed with joy and anticipation. However, she stopped midway. He wondered why she did not come nearer. Not being able to control his hunger any longer, he dived at the food in his mother’s beak. At that moment, his hunger overpowered his fear of flying and this made his first flight.

Q 3. “They were beckoning to him, calling shrilly. “Why did the seagull’s father and mother threaten him and cajole him to fly?”

Ans: The young seagull was afraid to fly. Even when he saw his brothers and sisters flying, and their parents helping and teaching them, he could not gather enough courage to make his first flight. That is why his father and mother were calling to him shrilly and scolding him. They threatened to let him starve on the ledge if he did not fly. They did so because they wanted him to leave his fear behind and learn to fly.

Q 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.

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Q 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?

Ans: Answers to both the questions 4 and 5 require you to use your own perspective as well as your analytical skills. These answer to the questions would vary from one person to another. It is suggested that you read the text carefully and try attempting it on your own.



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Part- II

The Black Aeroplane

(Solution)



Thinking about the text (Page-40)

Q 1. “I’ll take the risk.” What is the risk? Why does the narrator take it?

Ans: The risk was to fly through the black storm clouds. The narrator took the risk because his home was beckoning him. He was dreaming of his holiday and looking forward to be with his family. He also wanted to get home in time to enjoy a good English breakfast.

Q 2. Describe the narrator’s experience as he flew the aeroplane into the storm.

Ans: As he flew into the storm, everything went black. It was impossible to see anything outside the plane. It jumped and twisted in the air. When he looked at his compass, he saw that it was turning round and round. It was dead. Along with it, the other instruments, including the radio, were also dead. Suddenly, he saw another aeroplane. Its pilot waved at him, asking him to follow. He was glad to find a helper. He was using his last fuel tank and there was only enough fuel to fly five or ten minutes. Then, the other pilot started to go down and he followed. He suddenly came out of the clouds and saw the runway, on which he then landed his plane safely.

Q 3. Why does the narrator say, “I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota...”?

Ans: After landing, the narrator was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota because he had a horrific experience flying that plane. Although he was happy that he landed the plane safely. That is why he was not sorry to walk away. Instead, he was keen to know where he was and who the pilot was on the strange black aeroplane that helped him in the storm.

Q 4. What made the woman in the control centre look at the narrator strangely?

Ans: The narrator had asked the woman in the control centre about the identity of the other pilot. She looked at him strangely as there was no other plane in the storm. She told him that no other plane was flying that night. His was the only plane she could see on the radar.

Q 5. Who do you think helped the narrator to reach safely? Discuss this among yourselves and give reasons for your answer.

Ans: Probably, it was the narrator's own self that helped him through the storm. There was no other plane in the storm as the woman at the control centre could see only his plane on the radar. Also, no other plane was flying that night. In his fear, he might have been hallucinating. He was a good pilot, and it might have been his own self that came to his help.

Thinking about the Language (Page – 40)



1. Now, Try to guess the meanings of the word 'black' in the sentences given below. Check the meanings in the dictionary and find out whether you have guessed right.

1. Go and have a bath; your hands and face are absolutely *black* _____.
2. The taxi-driver gave Ratan a *black* look as he crossed the road when the traffic light was green _____.
3. The bombardment of Hiroshima is one of the *blackest* crimes against humanity _____.
4. Very few people enjoy Harold Pinter's *black* comedy _____.
5. Sometimes shopkeepers store essential goods to create false scarcity and then sell these in *black* _____.
6. Villagers had beaten the criminal *black* and blue _____.

Ans:

1. The meaning of 'black' in this sentence is that the face and hands are dark with dust and heat.
2. Here, 'black' refers to an angry look.
3. Here, 'blackest' refers to the darkest and cruellest crime against humanity.
4. Here, 'black' refers to dark and gloomy comedy.
5. The meaning of 'black' in this sentence is that the shopkeepers sell the described goods 'at a higher price'.
6. Here, 'black' means that the criminal suffered excessive beating at the hands of the villagers.

2. Match the phrases given under Column A with their meanings given under Column B: (Page-41)

	A		B
1.	Fly a flag	-	Move quickly/suddenly
2.	Fly into rage	-	Be successful
3.	Fly along	-	Display a flag on a long pole
4.	Fly high	-	Escape from a place
5.	Fly the coop	-	Become suddenly very angry

Ans:



A		B
Fly a flag	-	Display a flag on a long pole
Fly into rage	-	Become suddenly very angry
Fly along	-	Move quickly/suddenly
Fly high	-	Be successful
Fly the coop	-	Escape from a place

3. We know that the word 'fly' (of birds/insects) means to move through air using wings. Tick the words which have the same or nearly the same meaning.

swoop	flit	paddle	flutter
ascend	float	ride	skim
sink	dart	hover	glide
descend	soar	shoot	spring
stay	fall	sail	flap

Ans: The words which have the same or nearly the same meaning as 'fly' are as follows:

Swoop, flit, float, dart, soar, hover, sail skim, glide, flutter



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