How I taught my grandmother to read

English Communicative Chapter 1

Text book questions and answers

4. (Refer text book page number 6)

(a) The grandmother could relate to the central character of ‘Kashi Yatre’ as ........................................

(i) both were old and uneducated

(ii) both had granddaughters who read to them

(iii) both had a strong desire to visit Kashi

(iv) both were determined to learn to read

Answer: (iii)

(b) Why did the women at the temple discuss the latest episode of ‘Kashi Yatre’?

(i) to pass their time

(ii) the writer, Triveni, was very popular

(iii) they could relate with the protagonist of the serial

(iv) women have a habit of discussing serials

Answer: (iii)

(c) The granddaughter found her grandmother in tears on her return as .................................

(i) the grandmother had been unable to read the story ‘Kashi Yatre’ on her own

(ii) the grandmother had felt lonely

(iii) the grandmother wanted to accompany her granddaughter

(iv) she was sad she could not visit Kashi

Answer: (i)

(d) Why did the grandmother touch her granddaughter’s feet?

(i) As a mark of respect to her teacher
(ii) It was custom in their family

(iii) Girls should be respected

(iv) She had read the story of ‘Kashi Yatre’ to her

Answer: (i)

5. Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) What made Triveni a popular writer?

Answer: She was a great writer whose style of writing was easy to read and convincing. Her stories were very interesting and dealt with complex psychological problems that ordinary people face in their lives.

(b) Why did the grandmother depend on her granddaughter to know the story?

Answer: The grandmother could not read or write so she had to depend on her granddaughter to know the story. Every week when the weekly Karmaveera arrived, she would read out latest chapter from the novel Kashi Yatre to her grandmother. The grandmother never went to school and got married at a young age and hence didn’t receive an opportunity to learn.

(c) Pick out two sentences which state that the grandmother was desperate to know what happened in the story.

Answer:

Many times I rubbed my hands over the pages wishing that they could understand what was written.

I even thought of going to the village and asking you to read for me.

(d) Could the grandmother succeed in accomplishing her desire to read? How?

Answer: Yes. The grandmother succeeded in accomplishing her desire to read. She was a wonderful student who did an amazing amount of homework. She would read, repeat, write and recite. She worked harder than others and set the Saraswati Pooja day as the deadline for achieving her goal. She believed that age was no bar for learning.

(e) Which of the following traits would be relevant to the character of the narrator’s grandmother?

(i) determined

(ii) selfish

(iii) emotional

(iv) mean

Give reasons for your choice
Determined: The fact that she decided to learn to read at the age of sixty-two shows her determination. She was a wonderful student and worked hard to achieve her desire to read. Her age or other responsibilities did not prevent her from learning to read. She was willing to work harder than others and she did so. She also set Saraswati Pooja Day during Dassara as the deadline for achieving her goal. All of these show her determination.

Emotional: She was emotional too. She was in tears when her granddaughter returned home after the marriage because she had no one to read out to her the latest episode of the novel Kashi Yatre. She was too embarrassed to ask the help of others.

Here are some direct quotations from the story. Identify the speaker and the write what each quotation suggests about the speaker. You can choose the adjectives given in the box and you may also add your own.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Quality Highlighted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Granddaughter</td>
<td>‘Avva, is everything all right? Are you ok?’</td>
<td>Gentle, sympathetic, kind, concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Grandmother</td>
<td>‘At times, I used to regret not going to school, so I made sure that my children and grandchildren studied well.’</td>
<td>Determined, wise, prudent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Granddaughter</td>
<td>‘Avva, don’t cry. What is the matter? Can I help you in any way?’</td>
<td>Tender, gentle, helpful</td>
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<td>d. Grandmother</td>
<td>‘We are well-off, but what use is money when I cannot be independent.’</td>
<td>Concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Grandmother</td>
<td>‘I will keep Saraswati Pooja day during Dassara as the deadline.’</td>
<td>Determined, diligent, enthusiastic, systematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Grandmother</td>
<td>‘For a good cause if you are determined you can overcome any obstacle.’</td>
<td>Determined, systematic, wise, enthusiastic, prudent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Grandmother</td>
<td>‘I am touching the feet of a teacher not my granddaughter’</td>
<td>Humble, religious</td>
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9. You are the grandmother. How did you feel when your granddaughter gave you the novel ‘Kashi Yatre’? Write your feelings in your diary.

Answer

18th October 20xx, Monday
9 pm

I will not forget this day. It will live in my memory for as long as I live. Today my granddaughter gifted me a copy of my favourite story Kashi Yatre and I could read it. I can't express my happiness and gratitude in words. I had always wanted to read but never got an opportunity until I asked my granddaughter to teach me to read and write. I wish I had asked her earlier. She is a fantastic teacher and taught me with great patience and affection. I feel so independent now. I can now read all that I want. I wouldn't have achieved this sense of independence without my kind granddaughter's help. I touched her feet today to express my respect and gratitude for her and I am sure it was the right thing to do.

**Dialogue completion**

Swami: No, granny. You are so silly. He gets ninety out of hundred marks.

Grandmother: You must also try to get good marks like him. Do you know? Your grandfather sometimes frightened the examiners with his questions. He could answer a question in a tenth of the time that others took to do it. And because his answers were so powerful, sometimes his teachers would give him two hundred marks.

Swami: Enough, granny. Why do you bother about old unnecessary things? Don’t you want to hear about Rajam?

Granny: Yes, dear, yes.

Swami: Do you know granny? Rajam killed a tiger when he was a small boy. His father was camping in a forest and he had Rajam with him. Suddenly they were attacked by two tigers. One tiger knocked his father down from behind and the other started chasing Rajam. He is a brave and clever boy. He hid himself behind a bush and shot the tiger dead with his gun. Are you sleeping, Granny?

**Exam oriented questions and answers**

You are the neighbour of the grandmother in this story and you saw the grandmother touching the feet of the granddaughter on the day of Saraswati Pooja. Write a letter to your friend sharing your feelings about the incident.

Dear Janaki

How are you doing? I hope you all celebrated Dassara with great fervour. We had a great time here. By the way, do you remember my neighbour Krishnakka? She has just learned to read and write. Her grandmother taught her and on the day of Saraswati Pooja I saw Krishnakka touching the feet of her granddaughter. I was startled. In all my life, I had never seen an elder touching the feet of a youngster but now I understand why Krishnakka wanted to touch the feet of her twelve-year old granddaughter. She may be younger but she taught her grandmother to read, so it was appropriate for Krishnakka to show her respect for her teacher by touching her feet. After all, our culture insists that parents and teachers should be respected. We are all happy for Krishnakka and want to learn like her.

Yours affectionately

Madhavi