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## A Visit to Cambridge

Firdaus Kanga

## SUMMARY OF THE LESSON

This is the story of a meeting between two disabled people. Both were extraordinary in their fields. Stephen Hawking is a great scientist though he suffers from paralysis. He is confined to a wheelchair and he can speak only with the help of a computer. Firdaus Kanga, the writer and journalist from Mumbai was born with very weak and easily breakable bones. He too moves around in a wheelchair. He meets Hawking in England. The two had discussed how the so called normal people should look at the disabled.

The writer, Firdaus, was on a walking tour through Cambridge to UK. His guide told him about Stephen Hawking who was occupying Newton's chair at the university. But Hawking was a disabled fellow. He wrote 'A Brief History of Time', one of the bestsellers.

Firdaus phoned Hawking that he was from India and wanted to meet him and write about his travels in Britain. Hawking agreed to see him for half an hour. The thought of meeting somebody like him in a wheelchair, gave Firdaus courage. Both of them were disabled. Their bodies were disintegrating. Hawking had a little switch in his hand. He was able to move his finger to find the words on his computer. He felt exhausted very often. But his mind was brilliant and bubbling with thoughts.

Firdaus remarked that people often thought that disabled people were unhappy people. Hawking said that it was an amusing attitude. He admitted that he felt annoyed when another disabled person came and disturbed him in his work. The body in his case was just a box for the brilliant mind and soul. He did not see anything good about being disabled.

Seeing the poor condition of the great scientist, Firdaus felt great relief even though he could neither walk nor even stand. Hawking did not like the idea of the disabled Olympics. He thought that it was a waste of time. His advice to the disabled people was that they should concentrate on what they were good at.

Hawking made Firdaus spend one hour instead of half an hour with him, have tea and see his garden. He went about in his motorised wheelchair. Then the time came to depart. Firdaus got up to take leave of him. He could neither kiss Hawking nor cry. But he was convinced that the paralytic scientist was a symbol of bravery.

## TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

## COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 104)

## Which is the right sentence?

1. "Cambridge was my metaphor for England." To the writer
  - (i) Cambridge was a reputed university in England.
  - (ii) England was famous for Cambridge.
  - (iii) Cambridge was the real England.

Ans. (ii) England was famous for Cambridge.

2. The writer phoned Stephen Hawking's house
  - (i) From the nearest phone booth.
  - (ii) From outside a phone booth.
  - (iii) From inside a phone booth.

Ans. (i) From the nearest phone-booth.

3. Every time he spoke to the scientist, the writer felt guilty because
  - (i) He wasn't sure what he wanted to ask.
  - (ii) He forced the scientist to use his voice synthesiser.
  - (iii) He was face to face with a legend.

Ans. (ii) He forced the scientist to use his voice synthesiser.

4. "I felt a huge relief...in the **possibilities of my body.**" In the given context, the highlighted words refer to
  - (i) Shifting in the wheelchair, turning the wrist.
  - (ii) Standing up, walking.

(iii) Speaking, writing.

**Ans.** (i) Shifting in the wheelchair, turning the wrist.

### WORKING WITH THE TEXT

(Page 104)

Answer the following Questions.

1. (i) Did the prospect of meeting Stephen Hawking make the writer nervous? If so, why?

(ii) Did he at the same time feel very excited? If so, why?

**Ans.** (i) The writer felt nervous because he was doubtful whether he would be granted the interview.

(ii) He felt excited at the same time because he had been there to see Prof. Hawking for half an hour.

2. Guess the first question put to the scientist by the writer.

**Ans.** The writer's first question might be about Hawking's disability and how he had accepted it.

3. Stephen Hawking said, "I've had no choice." Does the writer think there was a choice? What was it?

**Ans.** Living creatively with the reality of his weakening body was a choice.

4. "I could feel his anguish." What could be the anguish?

**Ans.** Prof. Hawking's mind was full of great ideas but he couldn't speak them out clearly and forcefully.

5. What endeared the scientist to the writer so that he said he was looking at one of the most beautiful men in the world?

**Ans.** Prof. Hawking's one-way smile.

6. Read aloud the description of 'the beautiful' man. Which is the most beautiful sentence in the description?

**Ans.** The line is "before you like a lantern whose walls are worn so thin, you glimpse only the light inside, is the incandescence of a man".

7. (i) If 'the lantern' is the man, what would its 'walls' be?

(ii) What is housed within the thin walls?

(iii) What general conclusion does the writer draw from this comparison?

**Ans.** (i) The walls of the lantern in Hawking's case were his skeleton like physical structure.

(ii) The glow of the eternal soul was housed within the thin walls of his body.

(iii) The writer draws conclusion that the eternal soul is more important than the body.

8. What is the scientist's message for the disabled?

**Ans.** Prof. Hawking's message for the disabled is that they should concentrate on what they are good at. It is foolish to try to copy the normal people.

9. Why does the writer refer to the guitar incident? Which idea does it support?

**Ans.** The writer spent many years trying to play a big Spanish guitar. One night he loosened the strings joyfully. This incident supports the idea that the disabled people should practise only what they are good at.

10. The writer expresses his great gratitude to Stephen Hawking. What is the gratitude for?

**Ans.** The author felt much inspired after meeting with Stephen Hawking. Therefore he felt grateful to him.

11. Complete the following sentences taking their appropriate parts from both the boxes below.

(i) There was his assistant on the line...

(ii) You get fed up with people asking you to be brave.....

(iii) There he was .....

(iv) You look at his eyes which can speak, .....

(v) It doesn't do much good to know .....

### A

- tapping at a little switch in his hand
- and I told him
- that there are people
- as if you have a courage account
- and they are saying something huge and urgent

## B

- trying to find the words on his computer.
- I had come in a wheelchair from India.
- on which you are too lazy to draw a cheque.
- smiling with admiration to see you breathing still.
- it is hard to tell what.

- Ans.** (i) There was his assistant on the line and I told him I had come in a wheelchair from India.
- (ii) You get fed up with people asking you to be brave, as if you have a courage account on which you are too lazy to draw a cheque.
- (iii) There he was tapping at a little switch in his hand, trying to find the words on his computer.
- (iv) You look at his eyes which can speak and they are saying something huge and urgent it is hard to tell what.
- (v) It doesn't do much good to know that there are people smiling with admiration to see you breathing still.

### WORKING WITH LANGUAGE (Page 106)

1. Fill in the blanks in the sentences below using the appropriate forms of the words given in the following box.

guide succeed chair travel pale draw true

- (i) I met a \_\_\_\_\_ from an antique land.
- (ii) I need special \_\_\_\_\_ in mathematics. I can't count the number of times I have failed in the subject.
- (iii) The guide called Stephen Hawking a worthy \_\_\_\_\_ to Issac Newton.
- (iv) His other problems \_\_\_\_\_ into insignificance beside this unforeseen mishap.
- (v) The meeting was \_\_\_\_\_ by the youngest member of the board.

- (vi) Some people say 'yours \_\_\_\_\_' when they informally refer to themselves.
- (vii) I wish it had been a \_\_\_\_\_ match. We would have been spared the noise of celebrations, at least.

- Ans.** (i) traveller (ii) guidance (iii) successor (iv) paled  
(v) chaired (vi) truly (vii) drawn

### 2. Look at the following words.

walk

stick

### Can you create a meaningful phrase using both these words?

(It is simple. Add *ing* to the verb and use it before the noun. Put an article at the beginning.)

...a walking stick

### Now make six such phrases using the words given in the box.

read/session

smile/face

revolve/chair

walk/tour

dance/doll

win/chance

- Ans.** (i) a reading session (ii) a smiling face  
(iii) a revolving chair (iv) a walking tour  
(v) a dancing doll (vi) a winning chance
3. Use '*all*' or '*both*' in the blanks. Tell your partner why you chose one or the other.
- (i) He has two brothers. \_\_\_\_\_ are lawyers.
- (ii) More than ten persons called. \_\_\_\_\_ of them wanted to see you.
- (iii) They \_\_\_\_\_ cheered the team.
- (iv) \_\_\_\_\_ her parents are teachers.
- (v) How much have you got? Give me \_\_\_\_\_ of it.
- Ans.** (i) Both (ii) All (iii) all (iv) Both (v) all

4. Complete each sentence using the right form of the adjective given in brackets.

- (i) My friend has one of the \_\_\_\_\_ cars on the road. (fast)  
 (ii) This is the \_\_\_\_\_ story I have ever read. (interesting)  
 (iii) What you are doing now is \_\_\_\_\_ than what you did yesterday. (easy)  
 (iv) Ramesh and his wife are both \_\_\_\_\_ (short)  
 (v) He arrived \_\_\_\_\_ as usual. Even the chief guest came \_\_\_\_\_ than he did. (late, early)

Ans. (i) fastest (ii) most interesting  
 (iii) easier (iv) short (v) late, earlier

**SPEAKING AND WRITING** (Page 107)

1. Say the following words with correct stress. Pronounce the parts given in colour loudly and clearly.

<u>camel</u>	<u>balloon</u>
<u>decent</u>	<u>opinion</u>
<u>fearless</u>	<u>enormous</u>
<u>careful</u>	<u>fulfil</u>
<u>father</u>	<u>together</u>
<u>govern</u>	<u>degree</u>
<u>bottle</u>	<u>before</u>

- In a word having more than one syllable, the stressed syllable is the one that is more prominent than the other syllable(s)
- A word has as many syllables as it has vowels.  
 man (one syllable)  
 manner (two syllables)
- The mark ( ' ) indicates that the first syllable in 'manner' is more prominent than the other.

Ans. Do yourself.

2. Underline stressed syllables in the following words. Consult the dictionary or ask the teacher if necessary.

artist	mistake	accident	moment
compare	satisfy	relation	table
illegal	agree	backward	mountain

Ans. Do yourself.

3. Writing a notice for the School Notice Board.

Step 1

Discuss why notices are put up on the notice board. What kinds of 'notices' have you lately seen on the board? How is a notice different from a letter or a descriptive paragraph?

Step 2

Suppose you have lost or found something on the campus. What have you lost or found?

You want to write a notice about it. If you have lost something, you want it restored to you in case someone has found it. If you have found something, you want to return it to its owner.

Step 3

Write a few lines describing the object you have lost or found. Mention the purpose of the notice in clear terms. Also write your name, class, section and date.

Step 4

Let one member of each group read aloud the notice to the entire class. Compare your notice with the other notices, and make changes, if necessary, with the help of the teacher.

Or

- Imagine that you are a journalist.
- You have been asked to interview the president of the village panchayat.
- Write eight to ten questions you wish to ask.

- The questions should elicit comments as well as plans regarding water and electricity, cleanliness and school education in the village.

### NOTICE

D.A.V. School 10th Sept, 20xx

Found a purse in the school playground. It has no name card in it. It seems that it belongs to some class VIII Student. The owner may contact the undersigned, prove his claim and take it away.

ABC

Roll No .....

VIII A

*Or*

### The questions that I would ask the president of the Village Panchayat:

1. What steps will you take for the development of education in your area?
2. What will you do for health facilities?
3. What will you do for roads?
4. What will you do for civic amenities?
5. How will you improve agriculture of your village?
6. What will you do for farmers?
7. What do you plan for female child promotion?



## ★ When I set out for Lyonesse

*Thomas Hardy*

### SUMMARY OF THE POEM

As a young architect, the poet went to Lyonesse to supervise the renovation work of the church. The place was 100 miles away. It was winter. The leaves were covered with snow. He was alone and shaky. His only companion was the star-light.

He was unsure what situation he would have to face there during his stay in Lyonesse. No seer could dare make a forecast. Even the wisest magician could not make guess about future.

But when he returned from that place, he was very happy. His eyes shone with joy. Everybody tried silently to guess the reason of his deep and uncommon happiness.

### TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

#### WORKING WITH THE POEM

(Page 110)

1. In the first stanza, find words that show
  - (i) that it was very cold.
  - (ii) that it was late evening.
  - (iii) that the traveller was alone.

- Ans.**
- (i) The word 'rime' shows that it was very cold.
  - (ii) The word 'starlight' shows that it was late evening.
  - (iii) The word 'lonesomeness' shows that the traveller was alone.
2. (i) Something happened at Lyonesse. It was
    - (a) improbable.
    - (b) impossible.
    - (c) unforeseeable.
- (ii) Pick out two lines from stanza 2 to justify your answer.

**Ans.** (i) Unforeseeable.

(ii) The relevant lines are:

No prophet durst declare

Nor did the wisest wizard guess

What would bechance at Lyonnesse

3. (i) Read the line (stanza 3) that implies the following.

'Everyone noticed something, and they made guesses, but didn't speak a word'.

(ii) Now read the line that refers to what they noticed.

**Ans.** *Do yourself.*

