

How I Taught My Grandmother to Read

Extract Based Questions

Q.1. Read the extract given below and answer the questions/complete the sentences that follow: "It is the story of an old lady and her ardent desire to go to Kashi or Varanasi."

(a) Whom does 'it' refer to ?

(b) Describe the character of the old lady on the basis of above mentioned lines.

Ans. (a) It's meter to the novel kashiyatre

(b) The old lady was kind and helpful.

(c) Ardent means very passionate.

Q.2. "At times, I used to regret not going to school, so I made sure that my children and grand children studied well".

(a) Who is the speaker of these lines?

(b) What did the speaker regret ?

(c) What did the speaker decide to do ? (Board Term 12013, NVZJUD2; 2012, Set 34)

Ans. (a) Awa, the grandmother.

(b) The speaker regretted not being educated in childhood.

(c) Awa decided to educate her children and grand children well. (1×3 = 3)

Q.3. "I felt so very dependent and helpless* We ate well—off:

but what use of money when I cannot be independent

(a) Who is the speaker of these lines ?

(b) When did the speaker feel so very dependent and helpless?

(c) By 'independent' the speaker here means. (Board Term 12012, Set 28)

Ans. (a) The grandmother.

(b) When the speaker had gone for a wedding in the neighbouring village her grandmother opened the magazine, looked at the pictures but was unable to read anything. It was at this moment that she felt dependent and helpless and understood the value of literacy.

(c) To be able to read and write and to be literate represents actual independence. (1×3 = 3)

Q.4. "But I knew I loved her immensely and there had to be some reason why she was talking to me. I looked at her

face. It was unhappy and her eyes were filled with tears."

(a) Who is 'V' and 'she' in the above extract ?

(b) Why did the grandmother want to talk with the narrator ?

(c) Why was the grandmother unhappy ? (Board Term 12012, Set 37)

Ans. (a) 'I' is the narrator, Sudha Murthy and 'she' is the grandmother.

(b) The grandmother was feeling distressed, so she wanted to tell her granddaughter about her inability to read.

(c) The grandmother was unhappy because she felt helpless and dependent due to her inability to read. She

regretted that she didn't go to school. (1×3 = 3)

Q. 5. "The amount of homework she did was amazing. She would read, repeat, write and recite.

(a) Who is 'she' in the above lines ? What 'homework' is being talked about there ?

(b) Why was she so keen on doing the homework ?

Ans. (a) 'She' is Avva, the grandmother. The homework is the practice of reading repeatedly, writing and reciting.

(b) She was keen because she wanted to learn how to read and write so that she could be independent. She had fixed

(c) The extract shows her willpower and strong determination.

Q.6. "When I came back to my village, I saw my grandmother in tears. I was surprised, for I had never seen her cry even in the most difficult situations."

(a) Who is T in the above extract ? Where did she/he return from ?

(b) Why was the grandmother in tears ?

(c) What does the last line of the extract tell you about the grandmother's character ?

(Board Term 12012, Set 41) (1×3 = 3)

Ans. (a) Sudha Murthy is T in the extract. She returned from a neighbouring village after attending the marriage.

(b) Grandmother was in tears as she realized how helpless and dependent she was due to her inability to read.

(c) The last line of the extract indicates that she was determined and strong and had taken life as it came.

Q.7. "Childish I made fun of the old lady. But she just smiled."

(a) Who made fun of the old lady ?

(b) Why did the speaker make fun of the old lady ?

(c) Why did the old lady smile ? (Board Term 12012, Set 44) (1×3 = 3)

Ans. (a) The granddaughter made fun of the old lady. ,

(b) The narrator made fun of the old lady because she wanted to learn the alphabet at the age of 62.

(c) The old lady smiled because she had confidence. She believed that for learning, age was no bar.

Q.8. "I felt so very dependent and helpless. We are well off but what use of money when I cannot be independent,"

(a) Who is T in these lines ?

(b) Why did she feel dependent ?

(c) What does the phrase 'well off' mean ? (Board Term 12012, Set 46) (1×3 = 3)

Ans. (a) The grandmother.

(b) She felt dependent because she was illiterate.

(c) Well off means prosperous. ;

Short Answer Type Questions (30-40 Words) (2 Marks)

each)

Q. 1. What were the gifts exchanged between the granddaughter and grandmother ?

Ans. Value Points:

Grandmother gifted her a frock material-granddaughter gifted her the Kashi Yatre-novel.
(CBSE Marking Scheme 2015)

Detailed Answer:

The Grandmother gifted her granddaughter a frock material and touched her feet as a sign of respect. The narrator gave her the novel-Kashi Yatre as a gift.

Q. 2. How did the granddaughter react to her grandmother's request to teach her to read ? (Board Term 1,2015 6SOOKQ5,2014 FROK4WI)

Ans. Value Points:

At first made fun of her – age bar – seeing her grandmother's determination to overcome illiteracy – started teaching her in earnest' (CBSE Marking scheme 2014),

Detailed Answer:

When the grandmother requested the granddaughter to teach her to read at first, she made fun of her. She wouldn't understand why at the age of sixty-two her grandmother had resolved to read and write. Then seeing her determination to overcome all obstacles she (granddaughter) started teaching her in earnest.

Q. 3. Why did the grandmother depend on her granddaughter to know the story of 'Kashi Yatre' ?(Board Term 1,2014 ZEZXJX) Or

Why did the grandmother feel so helpless when her granddaughter went to attend a marriage ?(Board Term 1,2012 Set 40)

Why was the grandmother upset when her granddaughter went to attend the wedding ? (Board Term 1,2010 Set C1)

Ans. As the grandmother was illiterate, she was unable to read the next episode of 'Kashi Yatre'. She felt embarrassed at asking the villagers to read it for her. So she felt miserable and dependent without her granddaughter.

Q.4. Who was Triveni ? What made her popular ? (Board Term 1,2014 NCT-JR)

Or

What made Triveni a popular writer ? (Textual) (Board Term 1-2012, Set 54)

Or

"Even after 40 years, people continue to appreciate Triveni's novels/' In the light of this remark what makes Triveni a popular writer ?(Board Term 1, 2010, Set C1)

Ans. Triveni wrote in the Kannada language. Her writing style was easy and had the power to convince the readers. Her stories were inspired from real life and were interesting. The readers can relate themselves with the characters in the stories as her stories were related to the lives of the ordinary people.

Q. 5. What were the circumstances which made the grandmother realize the importance of education ? Why had the grandmother not gone to school ? (Board Term 1,2013, XITIMG7)

Or

What incident made the grandmother realize the importance of education ? (Board Term 1,2012, Set 49,53)

Ans. Like other villagers/the grandmother was also fond of the weekly magazine, 'Karmaveera'. As she was not educated, she was dependent on her granddaughter to read that magazine for her. In her granddaughter's absence, she could not read the next episode of 'Kashi Yatre'. She felt embarrassed at asking the villagers to read it for her. This incident made her realize the importance of education. The grandmother had never gone to school because

she was born in an era when education of the women folk was not given much importance.

Q. 6. How had the narrator planned to surprise her grandmother ? How was she herself surprised ?(Board Term 1,2012, Set 35)

Ans. The narrator had planned to surprise her grandmother by gifting her a copy of the novel, 'Kashi Yatre'. The narrator was herself surprised when her grandmother touched her feet to show a mark of respect to the Guru.

Q.7. What message does the story 'How I Taught My Grandmother to Read' convey ? (Board Term 1,2012, Set 39)

Ans. The story 'How I Taught My Grandmother to Read' conveys that there is no age bar for learning. One can learn at any age, provided she/he has a strong will power and determination.

Q. 8. Why did Krishtakka want her children to study well ? (Board Term 1,2012, Set 58)

Ans. Krishtakka was not only the narrator's grandmother but also her student. She had a great zeal to learn to read Kannada and to become independent. She wanted to overcome her inability to read. She had been born in an era when education for women was not given much importance. Later, she understood the importance of education in life and thus, wanted her children to study well.

Q. 9. The novel 'Kashi Yatre' had a great impact on the narrator. Explain. (Board Term 1,2012, Set 60)

Or

Which aspect of the serial 'Kashi Yatre' appealed to the grandmother ? (Board Term 1,2010, Set B2)

Ans. Grandmother had a keen interest in the novel 'Kashi Yatre'. She identified herself with the protagonist whose ardent desire to visit Kashi and sacrifice for others had a great impact on the narrator.

Q. 10. Why was the grandmother so keen on doing the homework ? (Board Term 1,2012, Set 62)

Ans. The grandmother was keen on doing the homework because she wanted to become literate. She found her illiteracy to be a one, handicap for her. She wanted to be independent and self-reliant.

Q. 11. "Awa or the narrator's grandmother was a wonderful student". Justify with the help of the story.(Board Term 1,2012, Set 63)

Or

How was Awa a wonderful student ? (Board Term 1,2010, Set C2)

Ans. At the age of sixty-two, Awa resolved to learn the Kannada alphabets which was highly appreciable. She did a great amount of homework. She would untiringly read, repeat, write and recite which was amazing.

Q. 12. "Krishtakka was illiterate but a very intelligent learner". Explain. (Board Term 1,2012, Set 68)

Ans. Though illiterate, grandmother was a very intelligent lady. She could reproduce the entire story after reading it. She made-up her mind to learn to read and write at the age of sixty two and she did it very successfully.

Q.13. The grandmother in the story 'How I Taught My Grandmother to Read' was a very determined woman, yet at the same time very emotional. Justify. (Board Term 1,2012, Set 72)

Ans. The grandmother was determined to learn how to read. She worked hard with strong determination in order to achieve her target before the deadline she had set for herself. After she had accomplished her desire, she expressed her gratitude to her granddaughter. She touched the little girl's feet because she felt it was her duty to pay respect to her teacher irrespective of the gender and age. The grandmother seemed to be very emotional when she told the story of her life to her, granddaughter.

Q. 14. The grandmother touched the feet of her granddaughter. How did she justify this gesture of hers ?(Value Based Question) (Board Term 1,2010, Set 64)

Ans. It is a part of our culture that we touch the feet of God, elders and teachers as a mark of respect. But the grandmother touched the feet of her granddaughter. She justified the gesture by saying that she had not touched the feet of her little granddaughter but that she had given respect to the teacher who had taught her so well that she became literate.

Q.15. In the lesson 'How I Taught My Grandmother to Read' more than anybody else grandmother was interested in knowing about the latest episode of 'Kashi Yatre'. Why was she so much interested in it ?(Board Term 12010, Set C2)

Ans. She was interested as it was the story of an old lady and her ardent desire to go to Kashi and worship Lord Vishweshwara which is considered to be the ultimate punya. The story is of her struggle to go there. The grandmother identified herself with the protagonist as she too had not been to Kashi.

Q.16. How did Triveni, the writer capture the imagination of the readers ? (Board Term 12010, Set A1)

Ans. Triveni, the popular writer, dealt with complex psychological problems in the lives of the ordinary people. The readers could associate themselves with the characters in her story and hence, followed them.

Q. 17. What major Hindu belief did Triveni revolve her story around ? (Board Term 12010, Set A2)

Ans. Most Hindus believe that going to Kashi and worshipping Lord Vishweshwara is the ultimate punya. Her story revolved around this desire, which is in the heart of every Hindu.

Q. 18. What circumstances forced Sudha Murthy to become a teacher at the young age of twelve ?(Board Term 12010, Set B1)

Ans. The grandmother's realization of her shortcoming, her firm resolution to empower herself and her faith in Sudha's ability to teach her made Sudha a teacher at a young age.

Q. 19. How did Triveni's death leave a void in Kannada literature ? (Board Term 12010, Set C1)

Ans. Triveni was a popular writer who wrote in an easy style and convincing manner. She touched the lives of ordinary people by dealing with issues close to their lives. Thus, her early demise left a void in Kannada literature.

Q. 20. Which aspect of the serial 'Kashi Yatre' appealed to the grandmother ? (Board Term 12010, Set B2)

Ans. The aspect of the serial 'Kashi Yatre' which appealed to the grandmother was the protagonist's desire to go to Kashi and sacrifice her happiness for others.

Q. 21. Do you think that the grandmother was really impressed or influenced by the Kannada writer Triveni ? Why or why not ? (Board Term 12010, Set A1)

Ans. Yes, she associated herself with the main character of 'Kashi Yatre'.

Q. 22. What is the theme of the novel 'Kashi Yatre' ? (Value Based Question) (Board Term 12010, Set A2)

Ans. The novel describes the travails of an old lady and her deep yearning to undertake the much-cherished and arduous journey to Kashi. She ultimately sacrifices even her deepest desire in order to help an orphan girl. Thus, it is a story of yearning, struggle and sacrifice.

Q. 23. What was the name of the magazine in which 'Kashi Yatre' appeared ? How often did the villagers receive it? (Board Term 12010, Set C1)

Ans. The name of the magazine was 'Karmaveera'. The villagers received it once a week.

Q. 24. Could the grandmother succeed in accomplishing her desire to read ? How ? (Textual)

Ans. Grandmother had a keen desire to read. To achieve success in her desire, she worked very hard. She read, repeated, wrote and recited, i.e., she did everything that the lesson demanded. Her capacity to do the homework was 'amazing'. She showed that there is no age-bar for learning.

Long Answer Type Questions (80-100 Words) (4 Marks each)

Q.1. "All times, I used to regret not going to school, so I made sure that my children and grandchildren study well. "With reference to Krishtakka's saying, do you agree that one understands the importance of something that one does not have in one's life ? What does it reflect about the character and values of the speaker ? (Board Term 12014, FROK4WD (Value Based Question)

Ans. Value points;

- Always insisted on studying learning.
- Realized the importance of education, especially when she found herself to be completely dependent on her granddaughter.
- Granddaughter/despite being a girl was made literate by her grandmother keeping in mind the void she had felt in her life all along.
- Grandmother – quite radical, liberal, modern in making her children and grandchildren literate when she herself had been the victim of society's restriction.

Detailed Answer :

One understands the importance of something only when it is not present in one's life. Due to society's restrictions, Krishtakka could not study at the right age. But she always missed studying and learning. She realized the importance of education, especially when she found herself to be completely dependent on her granddaughter. She felt helpless when she couldn't read 'Karmaveera'. She made her granddaughter literate despite her being a girl. She did so keeping in mind the void she had felt in her life all along. We can call the grandmother quite radical, liberal and modern in making her children and grandchildren literate when she herself had been the victim of society's restrictions.

Q. 2. "I will keep Saraswati Pooja day during Dussehra as the deadline," says the grandmother. What does this statement reflect about the speaker?

What is the importance of being determined and punctual in our day-to-day life ? (Board Term 12014 MZPD310)

Ans. Grandmother was an old lady of sixty-two. She decided that she would learn to read so that she would become independent. She had set a deadline for herself and was determined to achieve it. Her willpower helped her to succeed in learning how to read. She believed that for learning, age is never an obstacle and she proved it right. Both determination and punctuality can take us a long way towards our destination. They provide us with the motivation to fight difficulties and overcome hurdles.

Q. 3. "The narrator felt happy that her student, her grandmother had passed with flying colours". Comment.(Board Term 12013, EWAJ2JM) ,

Ans. Value Points:

Grandmother was able to read the Kannada alphabets by the date. She could read the first page of tire book gifted to her by granddaughter (CBSE Marking Scheme 2013) 4

Detailed Answer:

Krishtakka proved to be a wonderful student. She read, repeated, wrote and recited all her lessons with great enthusiasm and concentration. Despite her age, the amount of work the grandmother did was amazing. On the day of the Dussehra festival, when she gifted her teacher (the narrator) with a frock material, the narrator also gave the grandmother a copy of 'Kashi Yatre' which by that time had been published in the form of a novel. When the grandmother read the novel, 'Kashi Yatre' and the author's name, TMveni as well as the publisher's name; the narrator's joy knew no bounds and she knew that her student had passed with flying colours.

Q. 4. Education is important for all—young and old alike. Discuss, with reference to 'How I Taught My Grandmother to Read'. (Board Term 12013, XtTIMGT) (Value Based Question)

Ans. I do agree that, 'Education is important for all—young and old alike'. Many instances can be cited in support of this statement. Although the grandmother was unlettered and unschooled, she realized the importance of reading and took a keen interest in literature. Secondly, she was fully aware of the drawback of being an illiterate. So she made it a point to ensure that her children and grandchildren studied well. She herself resolved to learn to read and write at the age of sixty-two so that she could be independent. It was all because she knew well that an educated person does not have to depend on others. Education helps one to gain confidence and opens the door for new opportunities. •

Q. 5. The old lady in 'Kashi Yatre', Sudha Murthy's grandmother and Sudha herself share some common values of characters. What values are they ? How are they important for our contemporary society ?(Board Term 12013, AGRO-91)

Ans. The principal character of 'Kashi Yatre' had an ardent desire to go to Kashi. The grandmother had a similar wish. She identified herself with the protagonist of the novel and followed her story with great interest. Both have a : compassionate nature and the spiritual learning; Both are the epitome of love, determination, wffl'ptnVer and dedication. The narrator, Sudha herself is a twelve year old girl and has developed a bond with her grandmother. She too-is sincere and hard working. As a loving teacher, she gifts her student 'Kashi Yatre'. She too is caring and respects the feelings of her grandmother. Thus, all the three characters leave a permanent impression of dedication, sacrifice and love on the reader's mind, , : .

Q.6. Imagine you are Krishtakka and you have achieved the goal that you had set before yourself. Write a letter to one of your nephews telling him about your achievement in about 150 words. (Board Term 1,2012, Set 40)

Ans. Murthy Villa

Karnataka –

26thNovember,20xx

Dear Ramanatham,

How are you ? I am fine here;! wanted to share my experience of learning how to read at this age. It is a dream come true for me. I am unable to express my joy tor being able thread and write. Now I am not dependent on ' anyone.

I realized the importance of reading when I could not read 'Kashi Yatra' in the absence erf Sudha. I felt handicapped and dependent at that time. It was then that I decided to learn to read and write. I set myself a target- date. With -m my strong will power and determination and

undoubtedly with Sudha's diligent labour, I achieved my target 3 before Saraswati Pooja on Dussehra. :± ;

Today, I am able to read quite well. I shall always be indebted to Sudha. She has helped me realize my goal and raised my self-esteem.

Do write soon
Yours affectionately,
Krishtakka

Q.7. What made the narrator's grandmother identify herself with the old lady of the novel 'Kashi Yatre'?(Board Term 12012, Set 28)

Ans. The principal character of 'Kashi Yatre' had an ardent desire to go to Kashi and worship Lord Vishweshwara. The grandmother had a similar wish as it was a popular belief that worshipping Lord Vishweshwara in Kashi was the ultimate punya.

In the story, there was an orphan girl, who wanted to marry but had no money. The old lady gave all the money she had saved for her Kashi visit to the girl. This act of sacrificing pleased the grandmother the most. She identified herself with the protagonist of the novel and followed her story with great interest. Her compassionate nature and the spiritual learning endeared her to the grandmother.

Q. 8. Suppose you are Sudha Murthy. Write a letter to your friend telling her how and why you taught your grandmother to read. (150 words) (Board Term 12012, Set 38; 2010, Set C1)

Ans. Murthy Villa, ,
Karnataka.
26th April 20xx
Dear Asha .

You will be glad to know that I've taught my grandmother to read. I wanted to share my experience of helping my grandmother become literate with you.

You know, granny was very fond of the novel 'Kashi Yatre'. She would listen with great interest and full concentration when I would read out the story to her. Thereafter, she would discuss the story with her friends. However, when I came to visit you last month, there was no one whom she could ask to read out the story for her. She felt disappointed as she was illiterate. The reason behind her illiteracy is not lack of interest but the fact that people in those days did not give much importance to girl's education. On her request, I taught her the Kannada alphabet. Now she is able to read as well as write. Really it is very satisfying to teach others.

You too should try it. *

Reply soon to my letter.

Your friend,
Sudha . ,

Q. 9. Suppose you are the grandmother. How did you feel when your granddaughter gave you the novel 'Kashi Yatre' to read? Write about your feelings in your diary in about 150 words. (Board Term 12012, Set 43,42)

Ans. 10, Saturday, December 20xx

Dear Diary,

I am feeling more confident and free today. I have become independent. I no longer feel embarrassed due to my dependence on others for reading. I can read well as I realized my shortcomings and worked hard to overcome them.

Sudha is a wonderful teacher. She has been my guiding light. She helped me in transforming my personality. I , accomplished my task in time- Sudha has gifted me the novel 'Kashi Yatre' as a mark of respect and appreciation. I was both thrilled and delighted to receive the novel in front of everyone. She has raised my self-esteem. My heart's desire to be able to read has been fulfilled and I shall ever be indebted to Sudha for it. I am full of gratitude and blessings for her. This is a gift. I shall always cherish.

Good Night Diary.

Q.10. Compare and contrast the character of the grandmother with Juliette. (Board Term 12010, Set C2)

Ans. Grandmother

The grandmother in the story 'How I Taught My Grandmother to Read' is a sixty-two year old lady. She enjoyed listening to 'Kashi Yatre' as she related herself with the protagonist. She is very loving and affectionate towards her grandchildren. She decides to learn how to read and write and sets Saraswati Puja day as the deadline. She is very humble. This can be seen from the fact that she touches her granddaughter's feet to show her respect, as her granddaughter has taught her how to read. She is very enthusiastic about reading, diligent and works very hard.

Juliette

She is a fickle-minded young woman.' She changes her mind too often. When she decides to sell the Villa, she wants more money for it than it is worth. This shows that she is very greedy. When she sees the potential buyers Jeanne and Gaston; her cleverness comes to the fore. She flatters the lady hoping to impress them. She is keen on maintaining appearances. She needs money but refuses to work to earn it. '

Q. 11. You are Krishtakka. Write a letter to Triveni, the popular IIS\$K telling her why you like 'Kashi Yatre' and how it motivated you to read.(Board Term 12010, Set B1)

Ans. Murthy Villa,

Karnataka

26th May, 20x x

Dear THveniJi,

I wish to thank you for the way, unknowingly, you have inspired me about a change in my life. I am an avid reader of your novel 'Kashi Yatre'.

My granddaughter would read out the weekly episode to me. I enjoyed the story as I could identify myself with the novel's main character, an old woman who did not go to Kashi as she had sacrificed her savings for the orphan girl's marriage. w .

When my granddaughter was away, I could not find out what was going on in the story as there was no one who could read it for me. I then decided that I too would learn how to read.

With her help, I soon learnt the Kannada alphabet, and now am able to read quite well. . .

All this would not have happened, and I would have remained illiterate, if you had not written such interesting and inspiring stories.

Thanking you once again.

Yours sincerely,

Krishtakka

Q. 12. The writer's grandmother is convinced that age is no bar when it comes to learning. She wants to convey the same message to her friends. Write a speech in about 150 words to be delivered by the grandmother conveying this most important message to her friends in the temple courtyard. (Value Based Question)

Ans. Dear friends, good evening. I want to stress upon you that age is no bar when it comes to learning. I was born at a time when it was not necessary to educate the girls. I got married when I was quite young and had children at a very young age. I became busier with the coming of my grandchildren. Like other people, I too was fond of 'Kashi Yatre'. Since I could not read, my granddaughter read it aloud for me but her week long absence made me realize my dependence on her. It was then that I decided to learn Kannada. I set Saraswati Pooja during Dussehra festival as my deadline. I put in a lot of hard work. My granddaughter proved to be a good teacher. She undertook the task of making a 62 year old woman literate. I achieved the target I had set for myself. There is nothing impossible, you just need strong willpower and

determination to make it possible.

Thank you.

Q. 13. Give a character-sketch of the grandmother.

Ans. The Grandmother was an old lady of sixty-two. She was uneducated as she had never been to school. She regretted her illiteracy when her granddaughter went to attend a wedding ceremony. At that moment, she felt helpless and dependent as she could not read 'Karmaveera' on her own. She didn't know how to read. This incident brought a change in her life. She decided that she would learn to read so that she would become independent. Her will power and firm determination helped her and she succeeded in learning to read. She believed that 'for learning, age is never an obstacle' and she proved it right. She was a traditional lady who believed in touching the feet of God, elders and teachers; that's why, on Dussehra festival, she touched the feet of her granddaughter as a mark of respect towards her teacher. To sum up, she was an affectionate lady with great will-power and firm-determination. * * * V

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