

# Class 12th English Flamingo Chapter 3 Deep Water Question Answers Gujarat Board

**Think as you Read (Textbook Page No. 27)**

**Question 1. What is the 'misadventure' that William Douglas speaks about?**

Answer:

William O. Douglas had just learnt swimming. One day, an eighteen-year-old big bruiser picked him up and tossed him into the nine feet deep end of the Y.M.C.A. pool. He hit the water surface in a sitting position. He swallowed water and went at once to the bottom. He nearly died in this misadventure.

**Question 2. What were the series of emotions and fears that Douglas experienced when he was thrown into the pool? What plans did he make to come to the surface?**

Answer:

Douglas was frightened when he was thrown into the pool. However, he was not frightened out of his wits. While sinking down he made a plan. He would make a big jump when his feet hit the bottom. He would come to the surface like a cork, lie flat on it, and paddle to the edge of the pool.

**Question 3. How did this experience affect him?**

Answer:

This experience revived his aversion to water. He shook and cried when he lay on his bed. He couldn't eat that night. For many days, there was a haunting fear in his heart. The slightest exertion upset him, making him wobbly in the knees and sick to his stomach. He never went back to the pool. He feared water and avoided it whenever he could.

**Think as you Read (Textbook Page No. 29)**

**Question 1. Why was Douglas determined to get over his fear of water?**

Answer:

His fear of water ruined his fishing trips. It deprived him of the joy of canoeing, boating and swimming. Douglas used every way he knew to overcome this fear he had developed since childhood. Even as an adult, it held him firmly in its grip. He was determined to get an instructor and learn swimming to get over this fear of water.

**Question 2. How did the instructor 'build a swimmer' out of Douglas?**

Answer:

The instructor built a swimmer out of Douglas piece by piece. For three months he held him high on a rope attached to his belt. He went back and forth across the pool. Panic seized the author every time. The instructor taught Douglas to put his face underwater and exhale and to raise his nose and inhale. Then Douglas had to kick with his legs for many weeks till these relaxed. After seven months the instructor told him to swim the length of the pool.

### **Question 3. How did Douglas make sure that he conquered the old terror?**

Answer:

Douglas still felt terror-stricken when he was alone in the pool. The remnants of the old terror would return, but he would rebuke it and go for another length of the pool. He was still not satisfied. So, he went to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire, dived off a dock at Triggs Island and swam two miles across the lake. He had his residual doubts. So, he went to Meade Glacier, dived into Warm Lake and swam across to the other shore and back. Thus, he made sure that he had conquered the old terror.

### **Understanding the Text**

#### **Question 1. How does Douglas make clear to the reader the sense of panic that gripped him as he almost drowned? Describe the details that have made the description vivid.**

Answer:

Douglas takes us through his near-death experience at the YMCA pool by detailing every little aspect associated with it. He details minutes of his emotional, mental and physical struggle with the paralysing fear of being drowned in the water. The first person narration of the incident also helps us to associate with his experience more deeply.

Though he did not lose his wits initially, he panicked when his strategy didn't work. His feeling of suffocation, fear and losing hold on sense perceptions make the readers experience what he does. His eyes couldn't see beyond the dirty yellow water. His voice did not assist him. His nose and mouth could only manage to take water to the lungs. His limbs became paralyzed with fear and his mind dizzy. His desperation to save himself kept him struggling until he went down the third time and blacked out. All these details make the description vivid.

#### **Question 2. How did Douglas overcome his fear of water?**

Answer:

When Douglas grew up, he took the help of an instructor to learn swimming. His training went on from October to April. For three months he was taken across the pool with the help of a rope. As he went under, terror-filled him and his legs froze.

The instructor taught him to exhale underwater and inhale through raised nose. He made him kick his legs to make them relax. Then he asked him to swim. He continued swimming from April to July. Still, all terror had not left. He swam two miles across Lake Wentworth and the whole length to the shore and back of Warm Lake. Then he overcame his fear of water.

#### **Question 3. Why does Douglas as an adult recount a childhood experience of terror and his conquering of it? What larger meaning does he draw from this experience?**

Answer:

The experience of terror was a handicap Douglas suffered from during his childhood. His conquering of it shows his determination, willpower and development of his personality.



He drew a larger meaning from this experience. "In death there is peace." "There is terror only in the fear of death." He had experienced both the sensation of dying and the terror that fear of it can produce. So, the will to live somehow grew in intensity. He felt released – free to walk the mountain paths, climb the peaks and brush aside fear.

### Talking about the Text

**Question 1. "All we have to fear is fear itself". Have you ever had a fear that you have now overcome? Share your experience with your partner.**

Answer:

I must have been about eight or nine years old. It was the night of Diwali. All the houses were shining bright with the rows of candles, oil lamps and electric bulbs. Children were bursting crackers. Suddenly, a cracker went up and hit the thatched roof of a poor gardener. Soon the hut was in flames. His only son, a tiny infant had severe burns before he could be rescued.

I began to tremble with fear as the police questioned the boys exploding crackers. From then on I had a fear of crackers, fire and police. My parents and I had to work very hard to remove this blemish. It was adversely affecting my personality. By learning the safeguards against fire and safe handling of crackers, I gradually overcame my fear. However, I still get panicked at the sight of a policeman in uniform.

The fear of police remained now; My uncle came to my rescue. He got me dressed as a police inspector in one of his plays, I commanded many policemen and scolded them for misbehaving with the common people. I learnt that policemen were also, humans and not demons. Police protect and help us to maintain law and order. Thank God, I have overcome all my fears now.

**Question 2. Find and narrate other stories about conquest of fear and what people have said about courage. For example, you can recall Nelson Mandela's struggle for freedom, his perseverance to achieve his mission, to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor as depicted in his autobiography. The story 'We're Not Afraid To Die,' which you have read in Class XI, is an apt example of how courage and optimism helped a family survive under the direst stress.**

Answer:

In his autobiography 'Long Walk to Freedom', Nelson Mandela tells the extraordinary story of his life. He brings vividly to life the escalating political warfare in the fifties between the African National Congress and the government, culminating in his dramatic escapades as an underground leader and the notorious Rivonia Trial of 1964, at which he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

He recounts the surprisingly eventful twenty-seven years in prison and the complex, delicate negotiations that led both to his freedom and to the beginning of the end of apartheid. Mandela also struggled against the exploitation of labour and on the segregation

of the universities. He persevered to achieve his mission and to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor. In 1990, he was freed from prison. The apartheid laws were relaxed. Mandela became the champion for human rights and racial equality. He also became the first non-white president of the Republic of South Africa.

### Thinking about Language:

**Question 1. If someone else had narrated Douglas's experience, how would it have differed from this account? Write out a sample paragraph or paragraphs from this text from the point of view of a third person or observer, to find out which style of narration would you consider to be more effective? Why?**

Answer:

The third-person account or one from the point of view of an observer is detached and objective. A real-life personal account is subjective and focuses more on the person's thoughts, feelings and emotional response. I would consider the first-person narrative style more effective as it is quite authentic and depicts everything faithfully.

Sample Paragraphs: (From the point of view of a third-person observer) A big bruiser of a boy, yelled, "Hi, Skinny! How'd you like to be ducked?" with that he picked up the 10-year-old tiny boy and tossed him into the nine feet deep end of the Y.M.C.A. pool. The kid struck the surface in a sitting position, swallowed water and at once went to the bottom.

Watching all this from a distance filled me with anxiety for the kid. I rushed towards the side of the pool. By that time, the boy had risen twice to the surface but being unable to grab a rope or support on the sidewall, he went down.

Before I could bail him out he sucked in more water and went down third time. I at once jumped into the pool. The boy's legs were limp. All efforts had ceased. I carried him on my shoulder and swam to the side of the pool. < to the first-aid measures and soon regained He was made to lie on his stomach. His back was slapped gently but firmly to make him vomit the water he had swallowed. He responded to the first aid measures and soon regained consciousness.

## Writing:

**Question 1. Doing well in any activity, for example, a sport, music, dance or painting, riding a motorcycle or a car, involves a great deal of struggle. Most of us are very nervous to begin with until gradually we overcome our fears and perform well. Write an essay of about five paragraphs recounting such an experience. Try to recollect minute details of what caused the fear, your feelings, the encouragement you got from others or the criticism. You could begin with the last sentence of the essay you have just read: “At last, I felt released – free to walk the trails and climb the peaks and to brush aside fear.”**

Answer:

“At last, I felt released. I was free to walk the trails and climb the peaks and brush aside fear.” This excerpt is a concluding line of an article. He is a cricketer, a batsman. He often got out when his personal score was within 90 and 100 as a result of fear. After strenuous efforts, he overcame this drawback.

Fear is an unpleasant emotion or thought that one has when one is frightened or worried by something dangerous, painful or bad that is happening or might happen. When I was going through my adolescent stage I thought it would be a courageous act to stand arms stretched on the parapet of the balcony.

Unfortunately, my foot slipped and I was about to go down. But miraculously I could seize the railing of the balcony. When I looked down the scene was dreadful. I was four floors away from the ground.

My condition was bad. I experienced vertigo, a sensation of spinning and dizziness. I suffered from fear of heights. Psychiatrists call it acrophobia. Looking down from great heights I developed vertigo, breathlessness, excessive sweating, muscle tension, heart palpitation, nausea and worst of all panic.

Acrophobia had become my enemy. Whenever I drove across flyovers, walk near big windows of a tall building or even climbing a ladder I was afraid. I prepared myself to encounter fear. But I had to make a steady approach. My doctor told me to set small goals and overcome them.

As time passed I began to visualize success. I took security precautions. I gained control on breathing. Anxiety worsens when the supply of oxygen is insufficient. I indulged in the act of deep breathing. Allowing time and space I took overcoming fear as a challenge. Now that I have succeeded I want to undertake some new adventures. Informal Letter Writing.

**Question 2. Write a short letter to a friend of yours about your having learnt to do something new.**



Answer:

Ahmedabad January 19, 2020, Dear Ramesh, I hope all is well with you. In your last letter, you had asked me if I was trying my hand at something new. Yes, I have. For the last three months, I have been trying to learn swimming. You will be happy to know that I have succeeded in my efforts.

To begin with I approached an instructor and asked him to help me learn swimming. We went to the pool and began to practice. First the instructor put a belt around me. A rope was then attached to the belt. It went through a pulley that ran on an overhead cable. He held on to the end of the rope and went back and forth in the pool. Days passed into weeks and weeks into months.

Gradually at the end of three months, I had mastered the art of swimming. My main hurdle was breathing. My instructor taught me to put my face underwater and exhale and to raise my nose above the water to inhale. I repeated this exercise several times and mastered it. Today I have gained good command on swimming. It is my strong desire that you also learn something new.

Convey my regards to your other friends and pay my respect to your parents.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

Yours affectionately,

Prithviraj

