

Chapter 3

Two Stories about Flying

I. His First Flight - Thinking about the Text

1. Why was the young seagull afraid to fly? Do all young birds are afraid to make their first flight or are some birds more timid than the others? Do you think a human baby also finds it a challenge to take its first step?

Ans.: The young Seagull was afraid of flying as he thought that his wings were not able to support him. Yes, it is a natural fact that all young birds are afraid to make their first flight. Yes, even a human baby is also confronted with the fear of taking its first steps.

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

Ans.: “The sight of the food maddened him,” suggests that the seagull was so hungry that when he saw the food, he excitedly wanted to have it. The young seagull had been hungry for the past 24 hours and desperately wanted to eat something but he could not get it which made him furious. The sight of a fish in his mother’s beak who flew upwards was eventually successful in making the seagull spread his wings for the first time. Thus, it was the food that forced the seagull to take the risk of his life.

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 as he thought that his wings would not support him. His two brothers and his sister had already flown away the day before and so, he was left alone and hungry on the ledge. His father and mother threatened to starve him on the ledge and cajoled him to fly because learning the art of flight was very necessary for a bird. But the young seagull was too timid to fly.

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.

Ans.: Yes, I have had a similar experience in my life. It is absolutely natural to feel scared in doing something new. It also happened to me when I was a small child. I had a great fear of cycling. I thought that I would not be able to balance it properly. This feeling had seized me altogether. However, my parents encouraged me to conquer my fears and go ahead.

One day my father took me to the ground with my bicycle. I began to ride it but failed in my initial attempts. But my father's continuous help and support eventually helped me fearlessly in completing my first round. Then I gradually gained confidence and after the second and third rounds, I was able to make a good balance. Thus I was able to overcome my fear of cycling.

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.: When we learn any new skill, we come across a set of difficulties. However, it is these difficulties that have to be bridged in order to be successful in learning a new skill.

In the case of the seagull, his parents cajoled him to fly.

In the same way, I was cajoled by my father to learn cycling. Although my success was not guaranteed it was very important to try as it has been very rightly said, “Try try until you succeed.”

I. His First Flight – Speaking

Q.1 We have read about the first flight of a young seagull. Your teacher will now divide the class into groups. Each group will work on one of the following topics. Prepare a presentation with your group member's and then present it to the entire class.

- A) Progression of models of Airplane
- B) Progression of models of Motor cars
- C) Birds and their wing span
- D) Migratory birds-tracing their flights

Ans.: A) The very first model of an aircraft was found long back in Egypt in 1898. And, with the dream of flying in the sky came Wright brothers from America. They were the first in the world to successfully invent and fly the airplane. The two brothers set a milestone for the aviation industry. And today, there exist many models of airplane and aircraft.

B) The credit of inventing the first motor car goes to a French person. He invented the first internal combustion motor car in 1808. After him, another successful discovery of the first petrol car was invented by a



German engineer, Karl Benz in 1885. And, then finally a diesel motor car was invented in 1890's by Rudolf Diesel.

C) Birds are amazing animals which can fly around in the sky and are exist different types of species according to different environmental conditions. Birds have wings of different lengths, some have short wings whereas some have very large wings. The wingspan of a bird is the distance from one wingtip to another wingtip. In the living birds, the wandering albatross has the largest wingspan ranging from 8 ft to 11 ft.

D) The birds migrate due to various reasons. The two most important reasons being the food and nesting conditions. Due to the scarcity of food in one location to the regions of high resources of food. But a very common fact is known about migrating birds is that two-thirds of the birds prefer flying in the nights.

I. His First Flight – Writing

Q.1 Write a short composition on your initial attempt at learning a skill. You could describe the challenges of learning to ride a bicycle or learning to swim. Make it as humorous as possible.

Ans.: I remember that I faced a lot of difficulties in learning swimming. The Yamuna River flows near to my village and I had the fear of swimming. But the children of my age often went there to enjoy and play in the water. I too wanted to enjoy but was always taken aback due to my deep seated fears. However, one day I decided to go in the river in the presence of my uncle. He held me with his hands and I gave my first attempt in shallow waters. Slowly I started to move my hands and legs and gradually began to float in water. I repeated it again and again and

within some days of rigorous practice, I gained a lot of confidence. Eventually, I overcame my fears and learned to swim confidently.

II. The Black Aeroplane - Thinking about the Text

Q.1 Study the sentences given below:

- (a) They looked like black mountains.
- (b) Inside the clouds, everything was suddenly black.
- (c) In the black clouds near me, I saw another aero plane.
- (d) The strange black aero plane was there.

The word 'black' in sentences (a) and (c) refer to a very dark colour i.e. the colour of the clouds mentioned in both these sentences.

Whereas

In sentences (b) and (d) it means lack of light or without light.

Thus, the word 'Black' has a variety of meanings in different contexts.

Now, consider the following sentences for example:

- (a) 'I prefer black tea' means 'I prefer tea without milk'.
- (b) 'With increasing pollution the future of the world is Black 'which means 'with increasing pollution the future of the world is very depressing/without hope.'

In sentence (a) the person is conveying his preference by saying that he prefers Black Tea which is a Tea without milk.

Whereas

In sentence (b) the person is conveying the hazards of pollution which is making the future of the world Black. By using the word black here, he is referring to the bleak and depressing future of the world.

Consider the following sentences and guess the meanings.

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 enjoyed 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. Here the word black refers to the Dirt on his hands.
2. Here the word black refers to the Angry Look.
3. Here the word blackest refers to the most wicked crimes.
4. Here the black comedy refers to the Funny side of things that are usually taken seriously.
5. Here the word refers to selling goods at a very high rate



6. Here the words black and blue are used to show the intensity of beating the criminals

Q.2 Look at these sentences taken from the lesson you have just read:

(a) I was flying my old Dakota aeroplane.

(b) The young seagull had been afraid to fly with them.

In the first sentence (a) the author was controlling an aircraft in the air.

In the second sentence (b) the seagull was afraid to move through the air, using its wings.

Another example can be: Children are flying kites

III. Match the phrases given under column A with their meanings given under column B.

A	B
1. Fly a flag	Move quickly/suddenly
2. Fly into rage	Be successful
3. Fly along	Show support for one's country
4. Fly high	Escape from a place
5. Fly the coop	Become suddenly very angry

Ans.:

A	B
1. Fly a flag	Show support for one's country Eg. The soldiers of our country leave no stone unturned in flying the flag of our country at all times.
2. Fly into rage	Becomes suddenly very angry Eg. She suspected her mother would fly into a rage if she asked her this question.
3. Fly along	Move quickly/ suddenly



	Eg. On the sight of a lizard, she suddenly flew along.
4. Fly high	Be successful Eg. Hard work is the only key to fly high.
5. Fly the coop	Escape from a place Eg. The criminal flew the coop when he saw the cops patrolling near by.

Q.3 We know that the bird 'fly' (of birds/insects) means to move through the 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.:

swoopâ	flit	paddle	Flutterâ
ascendâ	floatâ	Ride	skimâ
sink	dart	hoverâ	Glideâ
descendâ	Soarâ	shoot	Spring
stay	fall	sailâ	Flapâ

Writing

Q.1 Have you ever been alone or away from home during a thunderstorm?
Narrate your experience in a paragraph.

Ans.: Yes. During the summer vacations last year, one of my friends who lived in Nainital invited me to spend few days with him. I reached there on 5th June and we spent quality time together. Next day we planned to visit some temples and we began from the Naina Devi Temple. However, when we were going to visit another temple suddenly a strong wind started



blowing. We were surrounded by a dark dust storm. We could not see anything except the black blanket of the wind that surrounded us. We heard the sound of trees falling nearby which made us all the more anxious. Soon there was thunder and lightning and it began to rain heavily. Eventually, after some time, the dust settled down and we took a sigh of relief and returned home safely.

How to tell Wild Animals - Thinking about the Poem

Q.1 Does 'dyin' really rhyme with 'lion'? Can you say it in such a way that it does?

Ans.: The word 'dyin' does not really rhyme with 'lion'. However, the two words can be said to be rhyming as there are only minor differences when it is spoken that way.

Q.2 How does the poet suggest that you identify the lion and the tiger? When can you do so, according to him?

Ans.: The poet suggests that we can identify the Asian Lion by his enormous brownish-yellow colored body and loud sounds of roaring as he comes nearer. The Bengal Tiger can be identified by the black stripes on his yellow skin background who eats in one go as he comes near.

Q.3 Do you think the word 'lept' and 'lep' in the third stanza are spelt correctly? Why does the poet spell them like this?

Ans.: The words 'lept' and 'lep' is not spelled correctly. The correct spellings are 'leapt' or 'leap'. 'Leapt' is used sometimes in poetry as a past participle of 'leap'. The poet spells them creatively to show the magnitude of the attack of the leopard in the poem.



Q.4 Do you know what a ‘bearhug’ is? It’s a friendly and strong hug- such as bears thought to give, as they attack you! Again, hyenas are thought to laugh, and crocodiles to weep (‘crocodile’s tears’) as they swallow their victims. Are there similar expressions and popular ideas about wild animals in your own language(s)?

Ans.: A bearhug is the bear’s tight embrace when it kills its victim. No, the hyenas do not laugh and crocodiles do not cry which reflects their false attitude. However, in every language, we have similar expressions and popular ideas about wild animals.

Q.5 Look at the line “A novice might nonplus”. How would you write this correctly? Why is the poets ‘incorrect’ line better in the poem?

“A novice might nonplus”

Ans.: The correct form is “A novice might get nonplussed.” In the poem, the incorrect line seems to be better because it maintains the rhythm with the word caress.

Q.6 Can you find other examples of poets taking liberties with language, either in English or in your own language(s)? Can you find examples of humorous poems in your own language(s)?

Ans.: Yes, we can find many examples of the poet taking liberties with the language which is only done to create humor and interest of the reader, or else, the piece of writing would sound boring.

For example, in the following lines the word ‘prest’ is used instead of ‘pressed’ so that it may rhyme with ‘breast’:

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest Against the earth’s sweet flowing
‘breast’

Q.7 Much of the humor in the poem arises from the way language is used, although the ideas are funny as well. If there are particular lines in the poem that you especially like, share these with the class, speaking briefly about what it is about the ideas or the language that you like or find funny.

Ans.: Students must try to do it at their own level:

These are the lines that I like the most:

If he roars at you as you're dyin'

A noble wild beast greets you

Just notice if he eats you.

will do no good to roar with pain

Who hugs you very, very hard,

A novice might nonplus,

Hyenas come with merry smiles

The true Chameleon is small

In all these lines the ideas are treated

Humorously. They are wild beasts.

They can neither laugh, smile nor

Be gentle. They will kill the human

Beings at once as they get the chance.

The Ball Poem - Thinking about the Poem



Q.1 Why does the poet say, “I would not intrude on him”? Why doesn’t he offer him money to buy another ball?

Ans.: The poet says, "I would not intrude on him" because he wants the little boy to experience the meaning of loss in life. He knows that his loss cannot be compensated by another ball. The poet does not offer him money to buy another ball because he wants to make him realize that nothing is permanent in this world and one has to accept the loss as a part of life and give up on things one loves in order to survive.

Q.2 “.....starting down/All his young days into the harbor where/his ball went...’ Do you think the boy has had the ball for a long time? Is it linked to the memories of days when he played with it?

Ans.: Yes, the boy has had the ball for a long time i.e. from the very beginning of his childhood days. Since it has been a part of his life, he admires playing with that ball. He has numerous memories of the days when he played with it.

Q.3 What does “in the world of possessions” mean?

Ans.: The phrase “in the world of possessions” means that people in this world are driven by materialistic goods where everyone wants more and more. Money is the tool that encourages people to buy these materialistic possessions but sadly it does not possess the power to buy things one dearly loves.

Q.4 Do you think the boy has lost anything earlier? Pick out the words that suggest the answer?



Ans.: No, the boy has not lost anything earlier. The boy seems to rejoice merrily playing with the ball before it fell in the water. The line mentioned in the poem i.e. “He senses first responsibility” throws light on the fact that it was the first instance when the little boy was surrounded by feelings of grief on the loss of the ball.

Q.5 What does the poet say the boy is learning from the loss of the ball? Try to explain this in your own words.

Ans.: According to the poet, the boy is understanding the meaning of loss on account of losing his ball. Through this loss, he is understanding the worldly ways and trying to cope up with them. In this way, he is learning that one has to lose many things in life that may never come back. Therefore, in order to survive one needs to let go of things they love.

Q.6 Have you ever lost something you liked very much? Write a paragraph describing how you felt then, and saying whether-and how-you got over your loss.

Ans.: Yes, I have lost many things that were dear to me which I never wanted to lose. But among them, it was the loss of a watch that I could not bear since it was given to me by my dearest uncle who is no more now. He gave it on my 14th birthday which was really very special. When I went to visit the Lotus Temple in Delhi with my family, I lost it unknowingly being part of a large crowd. I found about the lost watch after returning home. At that time, I experienced feelings of dismay which I could not overcome for a long period of time.