

NCERT Solutions
Class 9 English Beehive
Chapter 6 - My Childhood

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Thinking about the Text

I. Answer these questions in one or two sentences each.

1. Where was Abdul Kalam's house?
2. What do you think *Dinamani* is the name of? Give a reason for your answer.
3. Who were Abdul Kalam's school friends? What did they later become?
4. How did Abdul Kalam earn his first wages?
5. Had he earned any money before that? In what way?

Answer

1. Abdul Kalam's house was on the Mosque Street in Rameswaram.
2. Dinamani is the name of a local newspaper. It is because Abdul Kalam tried to trace the stories of the Second World War in the headlines in Dinamani.
3. Ramanadha Sastry, Aravindan and Shivaprakasan were Abdul Kalam's school friends. Ramanadha took over the priesthood of the Rameswaram temple from his father; Aravindan went into the business of arranging transport for visiting pilgrims; and Sivaprakasan became a catering contractor for the Southern Railways.
4. During the Second World War, when the stoppage of trains was cancelled at Rameshwaram, the newspapers were bundled and thrown out of a moving train. Kalam's cousin, who distributed newspapers, asked him to help in collecting these bundles. This task helped Abdul Kalam earn his first wages.
5. Yes, Abdul Kalam had earned some money before that. When the Second World War broke out, there was a huge demand for tamarind seeds in the market. He used to collect the seeds and sell them at a provision shop on Mosque Street. This helped him earn one anna a day.

II. Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words).

1. How does the author describe: (i) his father, (ii) his mother, (iii) himself?
2. What characteristics does he say he inherited from his parents?

Answer:

1. i) The author, Abdul Kalam describes his father as an honest and generous man. He had neither much formal education nor much wealth. However, he possessed great innate wisdom and a kind heart. He was self-disciplined and avoided all inessential luxuries.

(ii) He describes his mother, Ashiamma as an ideal helpmate to her husband. She was a woman with a big heart who fed many people everyday.

(iii) He describes himself as a short boy with undistinguished looks. He possessed the qualities of honesty, self-discipline and kindness which he inherited from his parents.

2. He says that he inherited honesty and self discipline from his father. From his mother he inherited faith in goodness and deep kindness.

III. Discuss these questions in class with your teacher and then write down your answers in two or three paragraphs each.

1. “On the whole, the small society of Rameswaram was very rigid in terms of the segregation of different social groups,” says the author.

(i) Which social groups does he mention? Were these groups easily identifiable (for example, by the way they dressed)?

(ii) Were they aware only of their differences or did they also naturally share friendships and experiences? (Think of the bedtime stories in Kalam’s house; of who his friends were; and of what used to take place in the pond near his house.)

(iii) The author speaks both of people who were very aware of the differences among them and those who tried to bridge these differences. Can you identify such people in the text?

(iv) Narrate two incidents that show how differences can be created, and also how they can be resolved. How can people change their attitudes?

Answer:

(i) He mentions two social groups of orthodox Brahmins and Muslims. Yes, these groups were easily identifiable. They had their different dress codes and rituals. For example, Kalam used to wear a cap while his friend Ramanadham used to wear the sacred thread.

(ii) No, they were not only aware of their differences but also they naturally shared friendships and experiences. Kalam’s mother and grandmother would tell the children of their family bedtime stories about the events from the Ramayana and from the life of the prophet. During the annual Shri Sita Rama Kalyanam ceremony, his family used to arrange boats with a special platform for carrying idols of the Lord from the temple to the marriage site, situated in the middle of the pond called Rama Tirtha which was near his house.

(iii) The people who were very aware of the differences were:

- Kalam's new teacher who tried to segregate pupils on the basis of the religious divisions, and
- Wife of Sivasubramania Iyer (his science teacher) who did not allow Kalam to eat in her pure Hindu kitchen.

Among the people who tried to bridge these differences were:

- Kalam's science teacher Sivasubramania Iyer who invited, served and dined with him to break social barriers.
- Lakshmana Sastry who conveyed the strong sense of conviction to the new young teacher to reform him.

(iv) Two incidents that show how differences can be created are mentioned below:

- When Kalam was in the fifth standard, a new teacher came to their class. Kalam always sat next to Ramanandha Sastry. The teacher was unhappy to see a Hindu priest's son sitting with a Muslim boy. He immediately asked Kalam to sit in the last row. Both Kalam and his friend Ramanadha Sastry were extremely unhappy with this.
- In the second incidence, Kalam's science teacher Sivasubramania Iyer invited him for a meal to his house. His wife, who was very conservative got worried about the idea of a Muslim boy eating in her pure Hindu kitchen. So, she refused to serve him in her kitchen.

Now, the other incidents that show that how differences can be resolved are mentioned below:

- When Kalam and Ramanadha Sastry were heartbroken by their new teacher's order they informed their respective parents. Then Lakshmana Sastry summoned the teacher and conveyed the strong sense of conviction which ultimately reformed him.
- The second incidence took place when, the author's science teacher, Sivasubramania Iyer, though an orthodox Brahmin invited, served and dined with Kalam to bridge these differences

2. (i) Why did Abdul Kalam want to leave Rameswaram?

(ii) What did his father say to this?

(iii) What do you think his words mean? Why do you think he spoke those words?

Answer:

(i) Kalam wanted to leave Rameswaram for further studies. He wanted to study at the district headquarters in Ramanathapuram.

(ii) Kalam's father said that he knew that one day Kalam had to go away to grow. He gave him the example of the young seagulls who leave their parents' nest to learn to fly.

(iii) Abdul Kalam's father's words bear deep meanings. He encouraged his son to go ahead giving the example of the seagull. He also explained Kalam's mother to let her son go to grab the opportunities growth and success. Parents can nurture their kids with love, but they cannot give them their thoughts. They have their own thoughts. Kalam's father spoke those words to control his wife's emotions for their son.

Thinking about Language

I. Find the sentences in the text where these words occur:

Erupt surge trace undistinguished casualty

Answer:

The sentences in the text where these words occur are the following:

- (i) a sudden demand for tamarind seeds **erupted** in the market.
- (ii) I can still feel the **surge** of pride in earning my own money for the first time.
- (iii) I would later attempt to **trace** in the headlines in Dinamani.
- (iv) a short boy with rather **undistinguished** looks, born to tall and handsome parents.
- (v) The first **casualty** came in the form of the suspension of the train halt at Rameswaram Station.

Look these words up in a dictionary which gives examples of how they are used.

Now answer the following questions.

1. What are the things that can erupt? Use examples to explain the various meanings of erupt. Now do the same for the word surge. What things can surge?

Answer:

A few things that can erupt are violence, volcano, emotions, riots, etc.

Different sentences to explain the various meanings of erupt are given below:

- (i) Violence erupted during the protests.
- (ii) He erupted in anger.
- (iii) The volcano erupted, spewing lava across a wide area.
- (iv) On the day of the party, a pimple erupted on her face

Things that can surge are waves, electric current or voltage, boat, prices, crowd, etc.

Different sentences to explain the various meaning of surge are given below:

- (i) A power surge at that generator created a blackout across the whole district.
- (ii) The fans surged forward to see their favourite actor.
- (iii) The army surged towards their enemy.
- (iv) The prices of gold surged tremendously this year.

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2. What are the meanings of the word trace and which of the meanings is closest to the word in the text?

Answer:

The different meanings of the word trace are:

- (i) To move along, follow, or traverse
- (ii) To find something or someone through investigation
- (ii) To follow the development or process of something
- (iii) To draw, sketch, outline, etc.

The closest meaning of the word 'trace' in the text is to find something or someone through investigation.

3. Can you find undistinguished in your dictionary? (If not, look for the word distinguished and say what undistinguished mean.)

Answer:

No, the word undistinguished does not exist in the dictionary. It is the antonym of the word 'distinguished' which means eminent, famous, prominent, etc. Thus, undistinguished means ordinary, not prominent, common, etc.

II. 1. Match the phrases in Column A with their meanings in Column B.

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>
(i) broke out	(a) an attitude of kindness, a readiness to give freely

(ii) in accordance with	(b) was not able to tolerate
(iii) a helping hand	(c) began suddenly in a violent way
(iv) could not stomach	(d) assistance
(v) generosity of spirit	(e) persons with power to make decisions
(vi) figures of authority	(f) according to a particular rule, principle, or system

Answer:

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>
(i) broke out	(c) began suddenly in a violent way
(ii) in accordance with	(f) according to a particular rule, principle, or system
(iii) a helping hand	(d) assistance
(iv) could not stomach	(b) was not able to tolerate
(v) generosity of spirit	(a) an attitude of kindness, a readiness to give freely
(vi) figures of authority	(e) persons with power to make decisions

2. Study the words in italics in the sentences below. They are formed by prefixing *un* – or *in* – to their antonyms (words opposite in meaning).

- I was a short boy with rather *undistinguished* looks. (*un* + distinguished)
- My austere father used to avoid all *inessential* comforts. (*in* + essential)
- The area was completely *unaffected* by the war. (*un* + affected)
- He should not spread the poison of social *inequality* and communal *intolerance*. (*in* + equality, *in* + tolerance)

Now form the opposites of the words below by prefixing *un-* or *in-*. The prefix *in-* can also have the forms *il-*, *ir-*, or *im-* (for example: *illiterate* – *il* + literate, *impractical* – *im* + practical, *irrational* – *ir* + rational). You may consult a dictionary if you wish.

_____adequate	_____acceptable	_____regular	_____tolerant
_____demandin g	_____active	_____true	_____permanent
_____patriotic	_____disputed	_____accessible	_____coherent

_____logical	_____legal	_____responsible	_____possible
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Answer:

Inadequate	Unacceptable	Irregular	Intolerant
Undemanding	Inactive	Untrue	Impermanent
Unpatriotic	Undisputed	Inaccessible	Incoherent
Illogical	Illegal	Irresponsible	Impossible

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IV. Rewrite the sentences below, changing the verbs in brackets into the passive form.

1. In yesterday's competition the prizes (give away) by the Principal.
2. In spite of financial difficulties, the labourers (pay) on time.
3. On Republic Day, vehicles (not allow) beyond this point.
4. Second-hand books (buy and sell) on the pavement every Saturday.
5. Elections to the Lok Sabha (hold) every five years.
6. Our National Anthem (compose) Rabindranath Tagore.

Answer:

1. In yesterday's competition the prizes were given away by the Principal.
2. In spite of financial difficulties, the labourers were paid on time.
3. On Republic Day, vehicles are not allowed beyond this point.
4. Second-hand books are bought and sold on the pavement every Saturday.
5. Elections to the Lok Sabha are held every five years.
6. Our National Anthem was composed by Rabindranath Tagore.

V. Rewrite the paragraphs below, using the correct form of the verb given in brackets.

1. *How Helmets Came To Be Used in Cricket*

Nari Contractor was the Captain and an opening batsman for India in the 1960s. The Indian cricket team went on a tour to the West Indies in 1962. In a match against Barbados in Bridgetown, Nari Contractor (seriously injure and collapse). In those days helmets (not wear). Contractor (hit) on the head by a bouncer from Charlie Griffith. Contractor's skull (fracture). The entire team (deeply concern). The West Indies players (worry). Contractor (rush) to hospital. He (accompany) by Frank Worrell, the Captain of the West Indies Team. Blood (donate) by the

West Indies players. Thanks to the timely help, Contractor (save). Nowadays helmets (routinely use) against bowlers.

Answer:

Nari Contractor was the Captain and an opening batsman for India in the 1960s. The Indian cricket team went on a tour to the West Indies in 1962. In a match against Barbados in Bridgetown, Nari Contractor got seriously injured and collapsed. In those days helmets were not worn. Contractor was hit on the head by a bouncer from Charlie Griffith. Contractor's skull had fractured. The entire team was deeply concerned. The West Indies players were worried. Contractor was rushed to hospital. He was accompanied by Frank Worrell, the Captain of the West Indies Team. Blood was donated by the West Indies players. Thanks to the timely help, Contractor was saved. Nowadays helmets are routinely used against bowlers.

2. Oil from Seeds

Vegetable oils (make) from seeds and fruits of many plants growing all over the world, from tiny sesame seeds to big, juicy coconuts. Oil (produce) from cotton seeds, groundnuts, soya beans and sunflower seeds. Olive oil (use) for cooking, salad dressing, etc. Olives (shake) from the trees and (gather) up, usually by hand. The olives (ground) to a thick paste which is spread onto special mats. Then the mats (layer) up on the pressing machine which will gently squeeze them to produce olive oil.

Answer:

Vegetable oils are made from seeds and fruits of many plants growing all over the world, from tiny sesame seeds to big, juicy coconuts. Oil is produced from cotton seeds, groundnuts, soya beans and sunflower seeds. Olive oil is used for cooking, salad dressing, etc. Olives are shaken from the trees and gathered up, usually by hand. The olives are ground to a thick paste which is spread onto special mats. Then the mats are layered up on the pressing machine which will gently squeeze them to produce olive oil.