

**CBSE Class 09 English Language and Literature**  
**NCERT Solutions**  
**Beehive Chapter 6**  
**My Childhood**

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**Page No: 75 Thinking about the Text**

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

**1. Where was Abdul Kalam's house?**

**Ans:** 1. Abdul Kalam's house was on the Mosque Street of Rameswaram in the erstwhile Madras State.

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**2. What do you think *Dinamani* is the name of? Give a reason for your answer.**

**Ans.** Dinamani may be the name of a local newspaper because Kalam says that he used to trace the stories of the war in the headlines of Dinamani.

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**3. Who were Abdul Kalam's school friends? What did they later become?**

**Ans.** Ramanadha Sastry, Aravindan and Shivaprakasan were Abdul Kalam's school friends. Ramanadha Shastry became the high priest of the Rameshwaram temple, Aravindan had a business of arranging transport for the pilgrims and Sivaprakasan became a catering contractor for the Southern Railways.

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**4. How did Abdul Kalam earn his first wages?**

**Ans.** When emergency was declared the train halt in Rameswaram station was suspended. The newspapers were bundled and thrown out of the moving train. His cousin, Samsuddin who distributed newspapers wanted a helping hand to catch these bundles. Abdul Kalam took over the job. This is how he earned his first wages.

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**5. Had he earned any money before that? In what way?**

**Ans.** Yes, Abdul Kalam had earned some money before also. When the Second World War broke out, there was a sudden demand for tamarind seeds in the market. He used to collect the seeds and sell them at a provision shop. This earned him one anna per day.

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**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?**

**Ans: 1. (i)** Kalam says that his father, Jainulabdeen did not have much formal education or much wealth. But he possessed great innate wisdom and a true generosity of spirit. He avoided all inessential comforts and luxuries.

**(ii)** Kalam's mother, Ashiamma was an ideal helpmate to her husband. Everyday she provided food to more outsiders than her family members.

**(iii)** The author describes himself as a short boy with undistinguished looks, born to tall and handsome parents. He had a secure childhood. He was honest and self-disciplined who believed in goodness and deep kindness.

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**2. What characteristics does he say he inherited from his parents?**

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

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**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?**

**Ans: (i)** He mentions two social groups of Rameshwaram – Orthodox Brahmins and Muslims. Yes, these groups were easily identifiable. Kalam wore a cap, which marked him as a Muslim. Ramanadha Sastry wore a sacred thread which marked him a Hindu.

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**(ii)** No, they were not only aware of their differences but also they shared friendships and experiences. The bedtime stories Kalam's mother and grandmother told were about the events from the Ramayana and from the life of the Prophet. His three close friends were from Orthodox Hindu Brahmin families. During the 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.

**(iii)** The people who were aware of the differences among them were : (a) The new teacher who joined Rameshwaram Elementary School and came to teach Kalam in the fifth standard. He could not tolerate a Hindu priest's son sitting with a Muslim boy. Kalam was made to sit in the last bench. (b) His science teacher's conservative wife who refused to serve dinner to Kalam in her ritually pure kitchen. Those who tried to bridge these differences were : (a) Lakshmana Sastry who told the new teacher not to spread the poison of inequality and communal intolerance in the minds of innocent children. (b) Kalam's science teacher Sivasubramania Iyer who invited Kalam to his house, served food to him with his own hands and dined with him.

**(iv)** The first incident was when a new teacher came to their class and found Abdul Kalam, a Muslim boy sitting next to a Hindu priest's son, Ramanadha Sastry. Kalam was asked to sit on the back bench. Both of them felt very sad. They went home and told this to their respective parents. Lakshmana Sastry summoned the teacher and told him not to spread the poison of social inequality and communal intolerance among children. The teacher regretted his behaviour and this incident ultimately reformed him.

The other incident was when his science teacher, Sivasubramania Iyer, invited Kalam to his house for meal. His conservative wife refused to serve Kalam in her ritually pure kitchen. His teacher served the food with his own hands and sat down besides him to eat his meal. Iyer invited him for dinner the next weekend also. The next week when Kalam visited the house Iyer's wife took him to her kitchen and served him food with her own hands. These two incidents show how differences can be created, and also how they can be resolved. People can change their attitudes by breaking social barriers and mingling with everyone.

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**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?**

**Ans: (i)** Kalam wanted to leave Rameswaram 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 says that the seagull flies across the sun alone and without a nest. He then quoted Khalil Gibran to Kalam's mother saying that her children were not her own children. They were the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They came through their parents, but not from them. They may give them their love, but not their thoughts as the children have their own thoughts.

**(iii)** Abdul Kalam's father's words bear great meanings. First, he inspires his son to go ahead by giving the example of the seagull. The seagull flies across the sun alone and has to find its means of livelihood. Similarly every child has to get separated from their parents and find their means. Secondly, he explains to Kalam's mother quoting Khalil Gibran parents can give their love to children but not their thoughts. Children have their own thoughts. He spoke those words to encourage Abdul Kalam and to control the emotional attachment of his wife for Kalam.

### Thinking about Language

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

erupt	surge	trace	undistinguished	casualty
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**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?**

**Ans:** A few things that can erupt are anger, volcano, tooth, rash, riots, unrest, etc. Erupt has several meanings. Their explanation, with examples, is given as follows:

**(i)** Start unexpectedly

Example: Riots erupted in the city.

**(ii)** Start to burn or burst into flames

Example: The spark soon erupted into flames.

**(iii)** Become active and spew forth lava and rocks

Example: The molten lava erupted out of the active volcano.

**(iv)** Forceful and violent release of something pent up

Example: The difference in their views soon erupted in a fight.

**(v)** Sudden appearance on the skin

Example: On the day of the party, a pimple erupted on her face.

**(vi)** Break out

Example: Eruption of the wisdom tooth gives a lot of pain.

Things that can surge are pride, anxiety, waves, boats, army, etc. The several meanings it has can be explained with the following examples:

**(i)** Sudden forceful flow

Example: The boy drowned in the surging waves.

**(ii)** Rise and move forward

The army surged towards their enemy.

**(iii)** Heave upward under the influence of a natural force

Example: The boat surged in the high tide.

**(iv)** See one's performance improve

Example: Hard work helped to surge Sandra's scores.

**(v)** A sudden or abrupt strong increase

Example: The surge in the stock market left people in a shock.

**(vi)** Rise rapidly

Example: As time passed, her tension surged.

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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?**

**Ans.** The following are the meanings of the word trace:

**(i)** Follow, discover, or ascertain the course of development of something

**(ii)** Make a mark or lines on a surface

**(iii)** To go back over again

**(iv)** Pursue or chase relentlessly

**(v)** Find or discover through investigation

**(vi)** Make one's course or travel along a path; travel or pass over, around, or along

**(vii)** Read with difficulty

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

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

**Ans.** No, the word undistinguished does not exist in the dictionary. However, its meaning can be derived from the meaning of the word 'distinguished', which denotes the 'special or eminent appearance or behaviour of a person'. Thus, undistinguished symbolises 'ordinary appearance or behaviour of a person'.

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

	<b>A</b>		<b>B</b>
(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

**Ans:**

	<b>A</b>		<b>B</b>
(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 unable 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 decision

**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
___ demanding	___ active	___ true	___ permanent
___ patriotic	___ disputed	___ accessible	___ coherent
___ logical	___ legal	___ responsible	___ possible

**Ans:**

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

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**IV. Rewrite the sentences given 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.



- Ans:** 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.
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**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.**

**Ans:** 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 the 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.

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**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, ground nuts, 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.**

**Ans:** 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.