

CBSE Class 10 English Language and Literature
NCERT Solutions
First Flight 2
Long Walk to Freedom

Page No: 18 Comprehension Check

1. Where did the ceremonies take place? Can you name any public buildings in India that are made of sandstone?

Ans: The ceremonies took place in the amphitheater of the Union Building of Pretoria. The Parliament House, The Rashtrapati Bhavan and the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi and Madras High Court in Chennai are some examples of Indian public buildings that are made of sandstone.

2. Can you say how 10 May is an 'autumn day' in South Africa?

Ans: 10 May is known as an 'autumn day' in South Africa because on this day, there was the largest gathering of international leaders on South African soil for the installation of South Africa's first democratic, non-racial government.

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3. At the beginning of his speech, Mandela mentions "an extraordinary human disaster". What does he mean by this? What is the "glorious ... human achievement" he speaks of at the end?

Ans: By "an extraordinary human disaster" Mandela means the inhuman practice of apartheid i.e. the racial discrimination suffered by the blacks at the hands of whites in South Africa. He considered it as "glorious human achievement" because of the establishment of South Africa's first democratic, non-racial government, where the President was a black man.

4. What does Mandela thank the international leaders for?

Ans: Mandela felt privileged to be the host to the nations of the world because not too long

ago, the South Africans were considered outlaws. On that day most of the countries' dignitaries were present to attend the swearing in ceremony. He, thus thanked all the international leaders for having come to witness his investiture as President, since this event could be considered as a common victory for justice, peace and human dignity.

5. What ideals does he set out for the future of South Africa?

Ans: Mandela sets out the ideals of poverty alleviation, removal of suffering of people. He also dreams of a society where there would be no discrimination based on gender or racial origins.

Page No: 21 Oral Comprehension Check

1. What do the military generals do? How has their attitude changed, and why?

Ans: The highest military generals of the South African defense force and police saluted Mandela and pledged their loyalty.

Their attitude towards blacks has suddenly changed. Instead of arresting a black, they saluted him. If it was during apartheid era, they would have arrested Mandela. The change in their attitude was because of struggle and sacrifice put in by many heroes of South Africa. This struggle not only ensured the freedom of South Africa but also brought a change of mindsets for many.

2. Why were two national anthems sung?

Ans: On the day of the inauguration, two national anthems were sung. The interpretation of national anthem from old republic as well as new republic was sign of the pledge of those who were laying the foundation of a new nation. As it was a pledge to build a society devoid of any type of discrimination, symbolizing the equality of blacks and whites, and to show that it will be a truly multicultural society.

3. How does Mandela describe the systems of government in his country (i) in the first decade, and (ii) in the final decade, of the twentieth century?

Ans: (i) In the first decade of the twentieth century, the white-skinned people of South Africa

patched up their differences and erected a system of racial domination against the dark-skinned people of their own land, thus creating the basis of one of the harshest and most inhumane societies the world had ever known.

(ii) In the last decade of the twentieth century, the previous system had been replaced by another more strong pattern, the one that recognized the rights and freedom of all people, regardless of the color of their skin.

4. What does courage mean to Mandela?

Ans: For Mandela courage does not mean the absence of fear but a victory over fear. According to him brave men need not only be fearless but should be able to conquer fear.

5. Which does he think is natural, to love or to hate?

Ans: For Mandela, love comes more naturally to the human heart than hate.

Page No: 24 Oral Comprehension Check

1. What “twin obligations” does Mandela mention?

Ans: Mandela mentions that every man has twin obligations. The first is towards his family, parents, wife and children; the second obligation is his contribution towards fellow people, his community and his country.

2. What did being free mean to Mandela as a boy, and as a student? How does he contrast these “transitory freedoms” with “the basic and honorable freedoms”?

Ans: Like any other kid, for Mandela also the freedom meant to make merry and enjoy the blissful life in every possible way. But once an adult, the antics of childhood look like transitory because in an adults perspective, most of the childhood activities are waste of time. As a grown-up, you have to step out of your comfort zone to earn a livelihood to bring the bacon home. It is only then that you get an honorable existence in the family and in the society.

3. Does Mandela think the oppressor is free? Why/Why not?

Ans: Mandela does not feel that the oppressor is free because according to him an oppressor is a prisoner of hatred, who is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness.

He feels that both the oppressor and the oppressed are robbed off their humanity.

Thinking about the Text

1. Why did such a large number of international leaders attend the inauguration? What did it signify the triumph of?

Ans: The presence of a large number of international leaders was a gesture of solidarity from international community to the idea of the end of apartheid. It signified the triumph of good over evil, the triumph of the idea of a more tolerant society without any discrimination.

2. What does Mandela mean when he says he is “simply the sum of all those African patriots” who had gone before him?

Ans: Mandela wants to pay his tribute to all the people who had sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom. He feels that he is simply the sum of all those African patriots who had gone before him as he only was carrying forward the baton of the freedom struggle, the legacy of leaders of yesteryears who had paved the path of co-operation and unity for him. Therefore, he got the support of his people to be able to come to power to bring equality for his own people.

3. Would you agree that the “depths of oppression” create “heights of character? How does Mandela illustrate this? Can you add your own examples to this argument?

Ans: Yes, I agree that the “depths of oppression” create “heights of character”. Nelson Mandela illustrates this by giving examples of great heroes of South Africa who sacrificed their lives in the long freedom struggle. India is full of such examples. During our freedom struggle, there was a galaxy of leaders of great characters. Probably the oppression of British rule created so many men of such characters. If we compare this with the quality of political leaders India is having today, then Nelson Mandela seems to be absolutely right.

4. How did Mandela’s understanding of freedom change with age and experience?

Ans: With age, Nelson Mandela realized that he had a lot of responsibilities towards his people, his community and his country. As a boy, Mandela did not have a hunger for freedom because he thought that he was born free. He believed that as long as he obeyed his father and abided by the customs of his tribe, he was free in every possible manner. He had

certain needs as a teenager and then certain needs as a young man. He slowly understands that it is not just his freedom that is being curtailed, but the freedom of all blacks. It is after attaining this understanding that he develops a hunger for the freedom of his people. Thus, age and experience made his perspective more wide.

5. How did Mandela’s ‘hunger for freedom’ change his life?

Ans: Mandela realized in his youth that it was not just his freedom that was being curtailed, but the freedom of all blacks. The hunger for his own freedom gradually turned into hunger for the freedom of his people. This desire of a non-racial society transformed him into a virtuous and self-sacrificing man. Thus, he joined the African National Congress and this changed the fearful man to a fearless rebel. He sacrificed the comforts of a settled family life to fight for a greater cause.

Thinking about Language

I. There are nouns in the text (*formation, government*) which are formed from the corresponding verbs (*form, govern*) by suffixing – (*ation or ment.*) There may be change in the spelling of some verb – noun pairs: such as *rebel, rebellion; constitute, constitution.*

1. Make a list of such pairs of nouns and verbs in the text.

| Noun | Verb |
|--------------|------------|
| rebellion | rebel |
| constitution | constitute |
| ... | ... |
| ... | ... |
| ... | ... |
| ... | ... |

Ans:

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

| Noun | Verb |
|----------------|--------------|
| Rebellion | Rebel |
| Constitution | Constitute |
| Formation | Form |
| Government | Govern |
| Obligation | Oblige |
| Transformation | Transform |
| Discrimination | Discriminate |
| Deprivation | Deprive |
| Demonstration | Demonstrate |
| Oppression | Oppress |
| Imagination | Imagine |

2. Read the paragraph below. Fill in the blanks with the noun forms of the verbs in brackets.

Martin Luther King's _____ (contribute) to our history as an outstanding leader began when he came to the _____ (assist) of Rosa Parks, a seamstress who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger. In those days American Blacks were confined to positions of second class citizenship by restrictive laws and customs. To break these laws would mean _____ (subjugate) and _____ (humiliate) by the police and the legal system. Beatings, _____ (imprison) and sometimes death awaited those who defied the System. Martin Luther King's tactics of protest involved non-violent _____ (resist) to racial injustice.

Ans: Martin Luther King's **contribution** (contribute) to our history as an outstanding leader began when he came to the **assistance** (assist) of Rosa Parks, a seamstress who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger. In those days American Blacks were confined to positions of second class citizenship by restrictive laws and customs. To break these laws

would mean **subjugation** (subjugate) and **humiliation** (humiliate) by the police and the legal system. Beatings, **imprisonment** (imprison) and sometimes death awaited those who defied the System. Martin Luther King’s tactics of protest involved non-violent **resistance** (resist) to racial injustice.

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II. Here are some more examples of ‘the’ used with proper names. Try to say what these sentences mean. (You may consult a dictionary if you wish. Look at the entry for ‘the’)

1. Mr Singh regularly invites the Amitabh Bachchans and the Shah Rukh Khans to his parties.
2. Many people think that Madhuri Dixit is the Madhubala of our times.
3. History is not only the story of the Alexanders, the Napoleons and the Hitlers, but of ordinary people as well.

Ans: 1. This means that Mr Singh regularly invites famous personalities such as Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan to his parties.

2. This means that Madhuri Dixit is compared to a landmark in acting in the form of legendary actress Madhubala.

3. This means that history is not only the story of the great fighters and leaders such as Alexander, Napoleon and Hitler, but also of ordinary people.

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III. Match, the italicised phrases in Column A with the phrase nearest meaning in Column B. (Hint: First look for the sentence in the text which the phrase in column A occurs.)

| | A | | B |
|----|------------------------------------|-------|--|
| 1. | I was not unmindful of the fact. | (i) | had not forgotten: was aware of the fact |
| | | (ii) | was not careful about the fact |
| | | (iii) | forgot or was not aware of the fact |
| | When my comrades and I were pushed | | |

| | | | |
|----|---|-------|---|
| 2. | to our limits | (i) | pushed by the guards to the wall |
| | | (ii) | took more than our share of beatings |
| | | (iii) | felt that we could not endure the suffering any longer |
| 3. | To reassure me and keep me going | (i) | make me go on walking |
| | | (ii) | help me continue to live in hope in this very difficult situation |
| | | (iii) | make me remain without complaining |
| 4. | The basic and honorable freedoms of ... earning my keep... | (i) | earning enough money to live on |
| | | (ii) | keeping what I earned |
| | | (iii) | getting a good salary |

Answer

| A | | B | |
|----|---|-------|---|
| 1. | I was <i>not unmindful of</i> the fact | (i) | had not forgotten; was aware of the fact |
| 2. | When my comrades and I <i>were pushed to our limits</i> | (iii) | felt that we could not endure the suffering any longer |
| 3. | To reassure me and <i>keep me going</i> | (ii) | help me continue to live in hope in this very difficult situation |
| 4. | The basic and honorable freedoms of ... <i>...earning my keep...</i> | (i) | earning enough money to live on |