
CBSE Class 10 English Language and Literature

NCERT Solutions

First Flight 3

Two Stories about Flying

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

Answer: It is very well said that challenges make you strong and let you face your fear. The young seagull also had a challenge to face, and he was afraid because it was his first flight. I think mostly all young birds must be afraid to make their first flights but exceptions are always there as they might not find it much challenging. Similarly, a human baby would also find it a challenge to take their first step.

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

Answer: The young seagull was very hungry. It was this hunger that ultimately compelled and encouraged him to fly. When he saw his mother tearing at a piece of fish that lay at her feet, his hunger intensified. He cried and begged her to give him some food. When he saw her coming towards him with food in her beak, he screamed with joy and anticipation. However, she stopped midway. Not being able to resist his hunger any longer, he dived at the food in her beak. At that moment, his hunger overpowered his fear of the great expanse of sea beneath the cliff. Finally, this plunge was followed by the seagull's first flight.

3. “They were beckoning to him, calling shrilly. “Why did the seagull’s father and mother threaten him and cajole him to fly?”

Answer: The young seagull was afraid to fly. Even when he saw his parents, teaching and helping his brothers and sisters to fly, he still could not gather enough courage to make that first flight. That is why his father and mother were scolding and taunting him of his

cowardice. They threatened to let him starve on the ledge if he did not fly. They did so because they wanted him to overpower his fear and take his first flight.

The Black Aeroplane

By Fredrick Forsyth

Page No: 40 Thinking about the Text

1. "I'll take the risk." What is the risk? Why does the narrator take it?

Answer: The risk is to fly through the black storm clouds. The narrator takes the risk because he wanted to reach Paris to celebrate Christmas with his family.

2. Describe the narrator's experience as he flew the aeroplane into the storm.

Answer: As he flew into the storm, everything went black. It was impossible to see anything outside the plane. It jumped and twisted in the air. When he looked at his compass, he saw that it was turning round and round. It was dead. Along with it, the other instruments, including the radio, were also dead. Suddenly, he saw another aeroplane. Its pilot waved at him, asking him to follow. He was glad to find a helper. He was using his last fuel tank and there was only enough fuel to fly five or ten minutes more. Then, the other pilot started to go down and he followed. He suddenly came out of the clouds and saw the runway, on which he then landed his plane safely.

3. Why does the narrator say, "I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota..."?

Answer: He was delighted to land safely out of dark stormy clouds, so, he was not sorry to walk away from his plane. He felt bad, when he was not able to thank his guide, who guided and saved him from that frightening situation, but he was so happy after landing that he didn't feel sorry for not being able to thank the guide pilot.

4. What made the woman in the control centre look at the narrator strangely?

Answer: The woman in the control room was surprised and looked at him strangely, when the narrator asked about the other aeroplane and its pilot. She said that no other aeroplane was seen on the radar during that time as the storm had already begun.

5. Who do you think helped the narrator to reach safely? Discuss this among yourselves and give reasons for your answer.

Answer: Probably, it was the narrator's own self that helped him through the storm. There was no other plane in the storm as the woman at the control centre could see only his plane on the radar. Also, no other plane was flying that night. In his fear, he might have been hallucinating. He was a good pilot, and it might have been his own self that came to his help.

Thinking about the Language

1. Try to guess the meanings of the word 'black' in the sentences given below. Check the meanings in the dictionary and find out whether you have guessed right.

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 enjoy 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. _____

Answer: 1. The meaning of 'black' in this sentence is that the face and hands are dark with dust and heat.

2. Here, 'black' refers to an angry look.

3. Here, 'blackest' refers to the darkest and heinous crime against humanity.

4. Here, 'black' refers to dark and gloomy comedy.

5. The meaning of 'black' in this sentence is that the shopkeepers sell these goods 'at a higher price'.

6. Here, 'black' means that the criminal was beaten badly by the villagers.

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2. 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	-	Display a flag on a long pole
4.	Fly high	-	Escape from a place
5.	Fly the coop	-	Become suddenly very angry

Answer:

	<i>A</i>		<i>B</i>
1.	Fly a flag	-	Display a flag on a long pole
2.	Fly into rage	-	Become suddenly very angry
3.	Fly along	-	Move quickly/suddenly
4.	Fly high	-	Be successful
5.	Fly the coop	-	Escape from a place

3. We know that the word ‘fly’ (of birds/insects) means to move through 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

Answer: The words which have the same or nearly the same meaning as ‘fly’ are as follows:
swoop, flit, float, dart, soar, hover, sail, skim, glide, flutter
