

Deep Water NCERT Text Book Questions and Answers

Deep Water Think as you read

Question 1.

What was the “misadventure” that William Douglas speaks about?

Answer:

William Douglas’ traumatic experience in the sea, as a child, made him afraid of water. However, as he was learning to swim in the YMCA pool, he was thrown into the deep end by an older boy. The experience terrified him as he had almost drowned and finally lost consciousness before being hauled out of the water.

Question 2.

What were the series of emotions and fears that Douglas experienced when he was thrown into the pool? What plans did he make to come to the surface?

Answer:

When Douglas was thrown into water, he landed in a sitting position, swallowed water, and went at once to the bottom. He was frightened, but planned to jump, as his feet touched the bottom, and bounce to the surface, and paddle to the edge of the pool. His repeated failed attempts left him terrified and exhausted, till he slipped into unconscious and was pulled out of the pool. The author went from fear to exhaustion and finally submission. He showed courage when he planned to reach the surface, however the repeated attempts drained his strength and he was gripped by terror. He eventually gave up and felt resigned before losing consciousness.

Question 3.

How did this experience affect him?

Answer:

The writer’s experience of near drowning affected him greatly. He felt weak and trembled on his way back home from the pool. He spent many more days in unrest. He never went back to the pool. He feared water and avoided it whenever he could.

Question 4.

Why was Douglas determined to get over his fear of water?

Answer:

Douglas was determined to get over his fear of water as he wished to get into the water of Cascades. He felt terrorised by the memories of the pool and regretted being deprived of the pleasures of fishing, canoeing, boating, and swimming.

Question 5.

How did the instructor “build a swimmer” out of Douglas?

Answer:

The instructor put a belt around Douglas to which a rope was attached. The rope went through a pulley fixed on an overhead cable. He held on to the end of the rope, and made Douglas swim for weeks. Three months later, he taught Douglas to exhale under water, and to raise his nose and inhale, and made him overcome his fear of putting his head under water. Next, the instructor held him at the side of the pool and made him kick with his legs. Gradually, after weeks of practice, his legs relaxed.

When Douglas had perfected each hurdle, the instructed coordinated his efforts and gradually built a swimmer out of Douglas.

Question 6.

How did Douglas make sure that he conquered the old terror?

Answer:

To make sure he had conquered fear, Douglas went to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire, dived in and swam two miles across the lake to Stamp Act Island. Only once when he was in the middle of the lake, did the terror return. But he confronted it and swam on. He also swam across Warm Lake to the other shore and back, to make sure that he had conquered his fear of water.

Deep Water Understanding the text

Question 1.

How does Douglas make clear to the reader the sense of panic that gripped him as he almost drowned? Describe the details that have made the description vivid.

Answer:

Douglas was pushed into the deep end of the YMCA swimming pool by a strong boy. He landed up in sitting position, swallowing water. He was frightened, but as he was going down to the bottom of the pool, he decided to make a big jump when his feet would hit the bottom of the pool, come up to the surface, lie flat, and paddle to the edge. But his fall seemed unending. The nine feet felt ninety to the little boy, and before his feet touched the bottom, his lungs were ready to burst.

As soon as his feet hit the bottom, he gathered all his strength and tried to spring upwards. Unlike what he had foreseen, he came up slowly. On opening his eyes, he saw nothing but water; he was terrified. There was nothing to hold on to and he felt suffocated. He tried to scream but no sound came. His eyes and nose came out of the water but his mouth was still under the surface. He thrashed at the surface of the water, but merely swallowed more water and choked. When he tried to bring his legs up, they hung like dead weights, refusing to move. He was pulled under water and once again he felt himself sinking back to the bottom of the pool. Breathless, he hit the water with all his strength. His lungs and head ached and he began to feel dizzy.

He decided to jump when he hit the bottom. However it made no difference. He groped around for something and felt even more terrorized, with his limbs refusing to move. He finally gave up—his legs felt limp and blackness swept his brain. He felt neither anxiety nor fear. On the contrary, he felt quiet and peaceful, but drowsy, and was finally oblivious of everything around him. The writer makes the description vivid by giving graphic details of the situation and of his fear.

Question 2.

How did Douglas overcome his fear of water?

Answer:

Douglas overcame his fear of water through sheer determination. The experience he had, as a child of three or four, had left an indelible imprint on his mind. This was aggravated by the experience that he had when he was thrown into the pool. This

made him stay away from water for many years. Later when he attempted to overcome his fear, his instructor taught him to swim, yet he felt terror-stricken when alone in the pool. He swam tirelessly up and down the length of the pool but he was not sure that the fear had left.

So he went to Lake Wentworth, in New Hampshire, and swam two miles across the lake to Stamp Act Island. Only once did he feel afraid, when he was in the middle of the lake, but he confronted it and swam on. To ascertain if he had overcome his fear completely, he went up to Meade Glacier, and swam across the Warm Lake. This assured him that he had accomplished his desire to overcome his fear of water.

Question 3.

Why does Douglas, as an adult, recount a childhood experience of terror and his conquering of it? What larger meaning does he draw from this experience?

Answer:

Douglas, as an adult, recounts his childhood experience of terror and how he conquered it. He recalled his ordeal as a child about how he almost drowned in a swimming pool. He narrated his journey, under his trainer, where he learnt to swim and finally how he swims across Warm Lake. The account does not attempt to glorify his accomplishment as a swimmer, but celebrates his efforts of conquering his fear of water.

The writer shares with his readers how the experience held a deep significance for him. He writes that he had experienced both the sensation of dying and the terror it produces. He came to realize the value of life through this incident. The account also sheds light on his take on adventure. Adventure calls on all the faculties of the mind and the spirit. It develops self-reliance and independence. Adventure is, however, enjoyed when one is rid of fear. Fear cripples an individual and limits one's scope. One stays tethered by strings of doubt and indecision and has only a small and narrow world to explore. Douglas shared his experience as a useful lesson and called upon his readers to conquer their fears.

Deep Water Talking about the text

Question 1.

“All we have to fear is fear itself.” Have you ever had a fear that you have now overcome? Share your experience with others in the class.

Answer:

Answers will vary.

Question 2.

Find and narrate other stories about the conquest of fear and what people have said about courage. For example, you can recall Nelson Mandela's struggle for freedom, his perseverance to achieve his mission, to liberate the oppressed, and the oppressor as depicted in his autobiography. The story “We're Not Afraid To Die”, which you have read in Class XI, is an apt example of how courage and optimism helped a family survive under dire stress.

Answer:

She could easily be called the Helen Keller of our times. The darkness that surrounds her life has not prevented Bibi Mohammadi from spreading the light of education. At twenty six, Bibi, whose lower limbs are paralysed teaches more than 300 students at her school in Nathnagar, Bhagalpur.

Born in a poor family of weavers, Bibi cleared her intermediate examination—an achievement, considering that her six siblings failed. But, her achievement has not come easy. At school, she was the laughing stock and when other children jumped and ran about, she could only watch. In 1983, while she was still studying, she decided to start a school of her own with around 50 students. Now she teaches over 300 children in three shifts.

Keeping in view the poor economic condition of her locality, she charges a nominal fee of Rs 10 from each student. Interestingly, she is the lone teacher and manages all the classes single-handedly. With slippers in her hands, she crawls from one corner to the other of the dingy, thatched-roof classroom. What keeps her going are words of inspiration from Qari Saheb, the Imam of the Nathnagar mosque. He told her to continue with her education so that by teaching children she could become financially independent and not feel handicapped. Many such stories of Gandhi's freedom struggle, Martin Luther King, and various everyday examples continue to inspire us.

Deep Water Extra Questions and Answers

Deep Water Short Answer Questions

Question 1.

Douglas's first experience in water was not a happy incident. Why?

Answer:

Douglas's first experience in water was very unhappy. It left an indelible imprint on his young mind. As a three or four-year-old, his father took him to the beach in California. As they were surfing, the waves pushed him down and swept over him. He felt buried in water and felt suffocated and frightened. All he could recall later was clinging to his father out of fear. The terror caused by the force of the waves resulted in fear and insecurity that he associated with water.

Question 2.

What were the writer's complexes that he needed to overcome in order to learn swimming at the YMCA?

Answer:

The writer had developed a fear of water at an early age that was associated with the bitter memory of the Yakima River. He had gone surfing and had almost drowned in the river. Secondly, he hated walking naked into the pool with his bare skinny legs. To overcome this complex, he had to hold back his pride.

Question 3.

What was the writer's misadventure in the pool at YMCA?

Answer:

The writer was still battling with his complexes in order to learn swimming when another misadventure befell him. He was sitting on the poolside waiting for others when a boy of about eighteen years old came up to him and asked him if he wanted to be “ducked”. Before the writer could react, the older boy picked him up and tossed him into the deep end of the pool.

Question 4.

Douglas had planned on coming out of the pool. Why did his plan fail him?

Answer:

When Douglas was pushed into the pool of water, he planned to jump to the surface and paddle to the edge of the pool. But before he touched bottom, he felt that his lungs were ready to burst. He tried to spring up, but came up slowly. He could see and feel nothing but water. He was too suffocated to scream for help as his mouth did not surface out of the water. As fear gripped him and his legs seemed paralyzed. His attempts to shoot up were thwarted and before he knew he was sinking back to the bottom.

Question 5.

How did Douglas feel when he sank into water the second time?

Answer:

Douglas was petrified of water and the fear worsened when he could not rise to the surface of water. His first attempt to rise was thwarted and he sank back to the bottom. He attempted again but felt a force pulling him under water. He seemed to sink down endlessly. He tried to open his eyes but saw nothing but water with a yellow glow. Fear gripped him and he could not shout out.

Question 6.

Why did his second attempt to come out of water fail?

Answer:

Douglas' second attempt to come out of water failed although he sprang from the bottom and came up like a cork to the surface. He planned to lie flat on the water and strike out with his arms and thrash with his legs. Keeping that in mind he decided to jump when he hit the bottom. However when he attempted to jump, it made no difference. His helplessness made him shiver with fright. His limbs refused to move as if he was paralyzed, he tried in vain to call for help.

Question 7.

Where did Douglas find himself when he regained his memory?

Answer:

When Douglas' repeated attempts to come out of water failed, he felt drowsy and lost consciousness. His next memory was of being carried. He got the feeling of floating in space and also felt tender arms lulling him to sleep. On regaining his consciousness, he found himself lying on the side of the pool on his stomach and vomiting. He recalled that the boy who threw him claimed that he was “only fooling”. He vividly heard someone giving instructions to carry him to the locker room.

Question 8.

How did the drowning experience affect Douglas?

Answer:

After the drowning experience, Douglas felt weak and was trembling as he walked home. That night he shook and cried in bed and could not eat. A haunting fear gripped his heart for days the slightest exertion upset him, made him unsteady in the knees and sick to his stomach. The experience affected him so adversely that he started dreading the sight of water and avoided it.

Question 9.

When did Douglas try to go into water again after the pool episode? What was the outcome?

Answer:

A few years after the misadventure in the pool, Douglas learnt of the waters of the Cascades. He tried to wade across the Tieton. He even attempted bathing in Warm Lake of the Goat Rocks. But all his attempts reminded him of the terrifying experience in the pool, and he would get paralyzed with fear.

Question 10.

How did the instructor “build a swimmer” out of Douglas?

Answer:

The instructor built a swimmer out of Douglas gradually. First he put a belt around him to which a rope was attached. The rope was hung through a pulley that ran on an overhead cable. He went into water holding on to one end of the rope. Three months later, the instructor taught Douglas to exhale under water. He also taught him to raise his head and inhale. The instructor taught him next to put his legs to use. With practice, he learned to coordinate his efforts and learnt to swim.

Question 11.

The instructor was satisfied but not the writer. Why?

Answer:

The instructor was satisfied with Douglas' progress, but Douglas was still apprehensive about facing his fears alone. Although after about six months of training, the instructor felt he had succeeded in teaching Douglas the technique, Douglas felt differently. He wondered how he would react when alone in water. He, thus, attempted to swim alone but his old terror kept coming back. He decided to practise some more to overcome the fear.

Question 12.

How did Douglas make sure that he conquered the old terror?

Answer:

To conquer his old terror of water, Douglas went to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire and swam for two miles across the lake to Stamp Act Island. He felt the old terror return but he confronted it and swam on. He practised the crawl, the breast stroke, side stroke, and back stroke. Then he swam across Warm Lake to the other shore and back. It was only then that he was sure of having conquered his fear of water.

Question 13.

What was the biggest lesson that the writer learnt during his swimming lessons?

Answer:

The biggest lesson that the writer learnt during his swimming lessons was the need to conquer his fear.

He learnt that in death there was peace but in terror there was the fear of death alone. The writer endorsed Roosevelt's views: "All we have to fear is fear itself." Being free from terror was being released.

Deep Water Long Answer Questions

Question 1.

Recount the experiences that made the writer terrified of water? How did he plan to overcome his fear?

Answer:

Two experiences made the writer terrified of water. As a child of three or four, he had gone with his father to a beach in California. They had been surfing and the waves knocked him down and swept over him. He remembered having felt buried in water and was gasping for breath. Later, when he was ten or eleven years old at the YMCA in Yakima, he was pushed into the pool by an older child. He had been saved from drowning but the experience had petrified him. The writer planned to overcome his fear by learning to swim in order to conquer his fear of water.

Question 2.

Why did Douglas' second attempt to come out of the pool fail?

Answer:

Douglas's second attempt to come out of the pool failed. As he sank to the bottom of the pool, the nine feet seemed like ninety. Before he touched the bottom of the pool, his lungs were ready to burst. Although Douglas mustered up all his strength and made a spring upwards, he came up slowly. On his way up, he saw nothing but dirty yellow water. He tried to latch on to something but he was surrounded by water. He felt suffocated and could not scream. As he reached up, his eyes and nose were out of the surface of water, but his mouth was still below the surface. His legs hung like dead weights and soon he sank back to the bottom of the pool.

Question 3.

When Douglas went down the third time, he could barely recall anything. What does he recall of the episode?

Answer:

When Douglas went down the third time, he remembered very little of it later. He saw nothing but dark water all around. It terrified him. Screams froze in his throat. He felt lifeless and the only sign of life was his beating heart and the pounding in his head. He was determined to push himself up when he hit the bottom but it made no difference.

He lost hope around that time. He shook and trembled with fright and his limbs were paralyzed. When he regained his consciousness next, he was lying on his stomach and vomiting. He overheard the boy who pushed him into the water claim that he was "only fooling." Douglas also heard someone say that he had almost died. He was carried into the locker room.

Question 4.

How did the instructor help Douglas learn swimming?

Answer:

Douglas' instructor helped build him as into a swimmer. He did this bit by bit. Douglas practised with him five days a week, for an hour each day. Each day the instructor put a belt around his waist, attached to a rope that was strung through a pulley on an overhead cable. He held on to the end of the rope as Douglas swam. Initially, each time the instructor relaxed his hold, the old terror returned.

However, after three months the tension began to ease. The instructor also taught him to put his face under water and exhale, and to raise his nose and inhale till he had eventually learnt to put his head under water. His instructor held him at the side of the pool and had him kick with his legs. The stiffness of the legs gradually relaxed and finally he could command a use over them. Thus piece by piece, the instructor built him into a swimmer.

Question 5.

Why was Douglas not satisfied even after the instructor finished his job of teaching him to swim? How did he help himself?

Answer:

The instructor was satisfied once Douglas learnt to swim. But Douglas still had his apprehensions. He wondered if he would be terror-stricken when was alone in the pool. He tried swimming the length of the pool but was still terrified. He went to Lake Went worth in New Hampshire and also dived off a dock at Triggs Island. He swam two miles across the lake to Stamp Act Island; in the middle of the lake, he put his face under water. Although he was scared, he swam on. It was when he dived into the Warm Lake and was . able to swim across that he shouted with joy at having conquered his fear of water.

Deep Water Value Based Question

Question 1.

Often, the key to the cause of a certain fear or phobia is the same as the key to conquering it. How does the story "Deep Water" justify this?

Answer:

Douglas, the narrator, had been scared of water as a boy. As a child, he was terrified of getting into water. In his attempt to overcome his fear, he tried to learn swimming. At YMCA, he was hurled into the deepest part of the pool by a big strong boy. He was almost drowned, and thereafter he lived a life of overwhelming fear of water. He was so petrified that the sight of water made him sick. Consequently he lost out on various water sports such as fishing or canoeing. He decided to overcome the constricting dread and with grit and determination, he found an instructor who trained him to swim, bit by bit. He successfully overcame his fear and felt liberated. He put his grit and determination to test. The experience of overcoming his fear of water was life-changing for the narrator.