

Chapter 4: The Treasure Within

Comprehension Check

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Question 1: What did Hafeez Contractor have nightmares about ?

Answer: Hafeez Contractor was extremely weak in Maths. He had no interest in it. So, he had nightmares about appearing for a Maths examination.

Question 2: What did the Principal say to him, which influenced him deeply ?

Answer: The Principal said to him, "Look here, son, I have been seeing you from day one. You are a good student but you never studied. I have taken care of you till now. Now, I can no longer take care so you have to take care of yourself. Your mother, a widow works hard to pay off your fees, etc. You have played only. Now, rise to the occasion and study." These words of his principal had a deep and indelible influence on Hafeez Contractor.

Question 3: ".....that year I did not step out onto the field." What was he busy doing that year ?

Answer: That year Hafeez Contractor remained extremely busy in prayers, eating and studying. That is why he did not step out on to the field to play. It was due to the inspiring words of his Principal, who advised him to study.

Question 4:

(i) What "distraction" did Hafeez Contractor create one day?

(ii) Would you have liked to participate in the "distraction" had you been with him?

Answer:

(i) One day, Hafeez Contractor created the distraction to play 'Chor Police' for one whole hour. It is basically the game mostly played by children. One child (thief) hides and others (policemen) tries to find him/her.

(ii) I would have certainly liked to participate in the 'distraction', that is, the game of chor-police had I been with Hafeez Contractor.

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Question 1: Hafeez Contractor wanted to join the police force. Why didn't he?

Answer: Hafeez Contractor was very keen to join the police force. However, his mother forbade him to do so. She advised him that instead of joining police force, he should do his graduation.

Question 2: In the architect's office, Hafeez Contractor was advised to drop everything and join architecture. Why?

Answer: One day, while sitting in the architect's office Hafeez Contractor pointed out that the architect's drawing of window detail was wrong. He told him that the window won't open. The architect admitted that Hafeez was right. His cousin's husband was an architect. He asked him to draw a few specific things. He did that immediately and satisfactorily. That is why Hafeez Contractor was advised to drop everything and join architecture.

Question 3:

(i) What was Mrs. Gupta's advice to Hafeez Contractor? (ii) What made her advise him so?

Answer:

(i) Mrs. Gupta was Hafeez contractor's teacher in 2nd and 3rd standard. She saw and admired his sketches. She told him that he was useless in everything else. So, he could become an architect because his sketches were good.

(ii) Being his teacher, Mrs. Gupta knew that Hafeez Contractor was useless in everything else. But his sketches were mule good. That is why she advised him so, that is, to become an architect when he will grow up.

Question 4: How did he help fellow students who had lost a button?

Answer: The fellow students who lost a button, would come running to Hafeez Contractor to seek help. He would cut a button for them from chalk, using a blade. Missing of a button was taken very seriously in his school. Thus he used to help his fellow students who could not afford to have a button missing.

Question 5: Which rules did he break as a school boy?

Answer: 'Hafeez Contractor, during his school days, broke the following rules:

- He would copy in tests.
- He would try to get hold of the examination papers before exams and study
- He would bring cinema tickets for fellow students and dine at their cost.
- He took pleasure in funny pranks and distractions like playing 'Chor Sipahi'
- He planned strategies as a gang leader.

Question 6:

(i) What is Hafeez contractor's definition of mathematics?

(ii) How would you want to define mathematics ? Do you like the subject ?

Answer:

(i) Hafeez contractor defines mathematics as putting designs, constructions, psychology and sociology together and making a sketch from all that.

(ii) I would like to define mathematics as the science of numbers. I do like mathematics because it has a lot of practical utility in life.

Exercise

Answer the following questions:

Question 1: Is it likely that someone who is original and intelligent does not do very well at school ? Should such a learner be called a failure ? If not, why not?

Answer: I think it is very much possible that someone who is original and intelligent might not do well at school. Our educational pattern does not encourage application of mind, Still conventional and stereotyped methods are in practice. The teaching is meant generally for the mediocre or ordinary students who learn by rote and excel in the exams.

As a result of it, exceptionally brilliant students who have interests in specialised kind of knowledge, aave suffer. They have original ideas, but they hardly get any chance to use these. Such students are sometimes considered failures. But those who are dullards at school sometimes turn toppers during their later life. And sometimes the toppers don't do very well after they finish their education.

Question 2: Who, in your view, is an "unusual learner ?

Answer: One whose interests are unique and different can be called an 'unusual learner. Such a learner proves to be a potential achiever when he is allowed to pursue his specialised interests of learning. The unusual learner may leave others behind if he or she is put on the right path. Eienstein did not do very well initially at school. But he is considered one of the most brilliant human beings.

Question 3: What can schools do to draw out the best in unusual learners ? Suggest whatever seems reasonable to you.

Answer: Unusual learners are unique and they have to be dealt differently. They should be provided with the unusual facilities and environment. They should be encouraged to participate actively in the activities of their tastes and likes. They should be handled properly in a psychological manner. Their peculiar talents should not be curbed. In short, they should be treated in a sympathetic and proper manner.

Champstreet