

Chapter 8: Reach for the Top

Part I - Santosh Yadav

Thinking about the Text

Question I:

Answer these questions in one or two sentences each. (The paragraph numbers within brackets provide clues to the answers.)

1. Why was the 'holy man' who gave Santosh's mother his blessings surprised? (1)

Answer:

Santosh's grandmother sought blessings for a daughter, not for a son from the holy man. Most of the expecting women wish a son to be born to them. So this surprised the holy man.

2. Give an example to show that even as a young girl Santosh was not ready to accept anything unreasonable. (2)

Answer:

She wore shorts and not the traditional Indian dress for girls.

3. Why was Santosh sent to the local school ? (3)

Answer:

She was sent to the local school. It was in line with the prevailing custom in her family.

4. When did she leave home for Delhi, and why ? (4)

Answer:

She left home for Delhi when she got admission in a school. She did so as she wanted to get a proper education.

5. Why did Santosh's parents agree to pay for her schooling in Delhi ? What mental qualities of Santosh are brought into light by this incident ? (4)

Answer:

They agreed to pay for her schooling in Delhi when Santosh got adamant. She told them that she would work part time to get more education. The qualities of determination coupled with a strong desire are seen here.

Question II:

Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words).

1. How did Santosh begin to climb mountains?

Answer:

She began to climb hills. She did so when she decided to check why the villagers climbing the hills vanished. Then she took admission in Uttarkashi's Institute of Mountaineering. She went on an expedition every year.

2. What incidents during the Everest expedition show Santosh's concern for her team mates?

Answer:

One climber lay dying at the South Col. Another climber Mohan Singh would have died if Santosh had not shared her oxygen with him. She gave her oxygen to save him from a sure death.

3. What shows her concern for the environment? (CBSE)

Or

How does Santosh Yadav show her concern for the environment? (CBSE)

Answer:

Santosh returned from Mount Everest. While doing so, she collected garbage from the Himalayas. She then brought it down with her. It weighed 500 kilograms.

4. How does she describe her feelings at the summit of the Everest?

Answer:

She describes her feelings in saying that that moment was simply great. It took sometime to sink in. She felt it was a spiritual moment. She felt proud as an Indian when she unfurled the Indian tricolour.

5. Santosh Yadav got into the record books both times she scaled Mt Everest. What were the reasons for this ?

Answer:

She set a record as the only woman to have conquered the Everest twice. Also she is the only Indian woman in the world to have set such a record.

Question III:

Complete the following statements.

1. From her room in Kasturba Hostel, Santosh used to
2. When she finished college, Santosh had to write a letter of apology to her father because
3. During the Everest expedition, her seniors in the team admired her while endeared her to fellow climbers.

Answer:

1. ... see the villagers going up the hill and suddenly vanishing after a while.
2. ... she was going directly for training and not home which she should have done.
3. ... climbing skills, physical fitness and mental strength while working together endeared her to fellow climbers.

Question IV:

Pick out words from the text that mean the same as the following words or expressions. (Look in the paragraphs indicated.)

1. took to be true without proof (1): ...
2. based on reason ; sensible ; reasonable (2): ...
3. the usual way of doing things (3): ...
4. a strong desire arising from within (5): ...
5. the power to endure, without falling ill (7): ...

Answer:

1. blessing
2. rational
3. in her own quiet way
4. urge
5. resistance/endurance

Part II - Maria Sharapova

BEFORE YOU READ

- Match the following.

Answer:

something disarming	something that makes you feel friendly, taking away your suspiciousness
at odds with	in contrast to, not agreeing with
glamorous attire	attractive and exciting clothes
in almost no time	quickly, almost immediately
poised beyond her years	more calm, confident and in control than people of her age usually are
packed off	sent off
launched	started
heart wrenching	causing strong feelings of sadness

• As you read, look for the answers to these questions.

- Why was Maria sent to the United States?
- Why didn't her mother go with her?
- What are her hobbies? What does she like?
- What motivates her to keep going?

Answer:

- Maria was sent to the United States for her tennis training.
- Her mother could not go with her because of visa restrictions.
- Her hobbies are fashion, singing and dancing.
- She likes reading the novels of Arthur Conan Doyle.

Thinking About The Text

Working in small groups of 4-5 students, go back over the two passages on Santosh Yadav and Maria Sharapova and complete the table given below with relevant phrases or sentences.

Answer:

Santosh Yadav	Maria Sharapova
1. Santosh's parents were affluent landowners who could afford ...	My father was working as much as he could to keep...
2. Wishing always to study 'a bit more', and with her father slowly getting used to her urge ...	The latter (her mother) was compelled to stay back in Siberia [My father working as much either.]
3. Equipped with an iron will, physical endurance and an amazing mental...	Instead of letting that depress me, I became more quietly determined and mentally tough.
4. The culmination of her hard work and sincerity came in 1942 ...	And that something in her lifted her on Monday, 22 August 2005 to the world number one position in women's tennis.
5. Then I unfurled the Indian tricolour and held itindecipherable I felt proud as an Indian ...	My blood is totally Russian. I will play the Olympics for Russia if they want me.

Thinking About Language

Question I:

Identify the two parts in the sentences below by underlining the part that gives us the information in brackets, as shown above.

1. 1. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts. (Contrasts her dress with that of others)
2. 2. She left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi. (Tells us what happened after the first action.)
3. 3. She decided to fight the system when the right moment arrived. (Tells us when she was going to fight the system.)
4. 4. Little Maria had not yet celebrated her tenth birthday when she was packed off to train in the United States. (Tells us when Maria was sent to the U.S.)

Answer:

1. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses Santosh preferred shorts.
2. She got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi when she left home.
3. When the right moment arrived, she decided to fight.
4. Little Maria had not yet celebrated her tenth birthday when she was packed off to train in the United States.

Question II:

Now rewrite the pairs of sentences given below as one sentence.

1. Grandfather told me about the old days. All books were printed on paper then.

2. What do you do after you finish the book ? Perhaps you just throw it away.
3. He gave the little girl an apple. He took the computer apart.
4. You have nothing. That makes you very determined.
5. I never thought of quitting. I knew what I wanted.

Answer:

1. Grandfather told me about the old days when all books were printed on paper.
2. I throw the book away after I read it.
3. After giving the little girl an apple, he took the computer apart.
4. You have nothing which makes you very determined.
5. I never thought of quitting as I knew what I wanted.

Writing

Working in pairs, go through the table below that gives you information about the top women tennis players since 1975. Write a short article for your school magazine comparing and contrasting the players in terms of their duration at the top. Mention some qualities that you think may be responsible for their brief or long stay at the top spot.

Question I:

The roll of honour of women who enjoyed life at the summit since everybody's favourite player, Chris Evert, took her place in 1975.

Answer:

Since 1975 Women's tennis has seen many legends. Steffi Graf (Germany), Chris Evert(U.S.) and Martina Navratilova (U.S.) have ruled the tennis world for more than 300 weeks each. Martina Hingis (Switzerland) and Monica Seles (U.S.) were some other mentally tough and determined girls who retained their top ranks for 209 and 178 weeks respectively.

Other women like Tracy Austin (U.S.), Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, Lindsay Davenport (U.S.), Jennifer Capriati (U.S.), Venus Williams (U.S.), Serena Williams (U.S.), Kim Clijsters (Belgium), Justine Henin-Hardenne (Belgium), Amelie Mauresmo (France), Lindsay Davenport (U.S.) and Maria Sharapova (Russia) topped the Tennis charts in the years to come.

Their confidence, capabilities and the desire to excel in life helped them to lead in their career.

(The above answer is only a sample provided for the student's help. It is recommended that students should self-attempt it.)

Question II:

Which of these words would you use to describe Santosh Yadav? Find reasons in the text to support your choices, and write a couple of paragraphs describing Santosh's character.

contented	determined	resourceful
polite	adventurous	considerate
weak-willed	fearful	independent
pessimistic	patient	persevering

Answer:

Words that can be used to describe Santosh Yadav are - contented, determined, resourceful, polite, adventurous, considerate, independent, patient and persevering.

Santosh Yadav is one of the most determined mountaineers of India. She is the only woman who has set the world record of climbing the Mount Everest twice. It was due to her perseverance, determination and passion that she managed to reach the golden heights of victory within a short span of time. She is a woman of immense potential and mental strength. Being a very considerate person she won the hearts of her fellow climbers. An avid environmentalist, Santosh collected and brought down 500 kilograms of garbage from the Himalayas.