

NCERT Solutions for Class 12 English

Chapter 3 – Deep Water

1. Notice these words and expressions in the text. Infer their meaning from the context.

Ans: Treacherous: unpredictably dangerous; unreliable or trustworthy.

Subdued my pride: to reduce or limit the level of one's self-esteem and confidence.

Flailed at the surface: Strike or lash out violently at the water's surface in an attempt to get out.

Fishing for landlocked salmon: to go salmon fishing in a certain lake for a specific type of salmon.

Misadventure: an accident that ends up being a disaster.

Bob to the surface like a cork: to float or resemble a cork in water in terms of buoyancy.

The curtain of life fell: to denote the end of life or a near-death experience.

Back and forth across the pool: to swim from one side of a swimming pool to the other.

Think as You Read

1. What is the "misadventure" that William Douglas speaks about?

Ans: Douglas refers to the near-drowning episode at the Y.M.C.A. swimming pool as a "misadventure." At the time, the author was perhaps ten or eleven years old and had only just begun to learn to swim by emulating others. He began drowning after being shoved into the sea by someone who couldn't swim. He developed a great phobia of water as a result of his fight to the surface and avoid drowning, which prevented him from participating in waterrelated activities for many years.

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?

Ans: He did not immediately lose his mind when he realized he was being tossed into the pool. Despite his fear, he devised a plan to go to the surface, but he was unable to carry it through. He was terrified and felt as if he was being suffocated by the water. His senses faded, his heart hammered loudly, and his limbs became paralyzed by terror. As he sipped

water in a desperate attempt to get out of the sea, his thoughts got dizzy and his lungs ached. Finally, he ran out of strength and motivation to keep fighting and blacked out.

Douglas intended to let himself descend until his feet reached the bottom, then leap back to the surface like a cork. Then he'd lie flat on the water's surface and paddle to the pool's edge.

3. How did this experience affect him?

Ans: The near-death experience of drowning had a profound psychological influence on him. For many years, he had a severely disturbed emotional equilibrium. He was deprived of any water-related activity since he couldn't stand being near water.

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

Ans: Douglas lamented not being able to participate in aquatic activities such as canoeing, boating, swimming, fishing, and so on. The desire to enjoy them and the need to regain his lost trust in the water drove him to attempt every possible method to overcome his anxiety. By hiring a swimming coach, he was ultimately able to overcome his mental disability.

5. How did the instructor "build a swimmer" out of Douglas?

Ans: The coach steadily improved Douglas' mentality before moving on to his physical movements and finally integrating all of his components to create a swimmer.

Initially, he forced Douglas to swim back and forth across the pool to get him used to it. While Douglas was in the pool, he employed a complex device that included a rope, belt, pulley, and an overhead wire to keep them connected. Then, one by one, he taught Douglas how to swim, including how to put his head in the water, exhale and inhale while in the water, and how to use his hands, body, and legs. Finally, he incorporated these improved stages throughout Douglas' entire swimming experience.

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

Ans: Douglas was still unsure about his swimming and whether or not he had conquered his phobia after the swimming instruction was completed. He was dead set on getting rid of it for good. He swam in the pool by himself. He went diving at Lake Wentworth. He tried every single stroke he'd learned there. In the middle of the lake, he battled back the sliver of panic that had held him. Finally, he realized that he had fully transcended his previous dread on his diving expedition in Warm Lake.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

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?

Ans: Douglas takes us through every detail of his near-death incident at the Y.M.C.A. pool. He goes into minute-by-minute detail about his emotional, mental, and physical fight with the debilitating dread of drowning in water. The incident's first-person narration also allows us to better identify with his perspective. He didn't lose his mind at first, but when his plan didn't succeed, he panicked. The readers will feel suffocation, terror, and a loss of control over their sense impressions like he does. His vision was obstructed by the filthy yellow water. His voice didn't help him at all. Only his nose and mouth could get water into his lungs. Fear paralyzed his limbs and made his mind dizzy. His desperation to preserve himself drove him to struggle until he blacked out for the third time. All of these nuances add to the description's realism.

2. How did Douglas overcome his fear of water?

Ans: He attempted to overcome his phobia of water on his own at first.

But when that failed, he hired his tutor, who meticulously focused on Douglas' anxiety. Douglas started by learning to swim with his assistance.

After that, he practised exhaling-inhaling in water to overcome his anxiety of submerging his head. Then he progressed to mastering individual swimming steps, which his instructor eventually blended into a whole swimming experience. Douglas could not only swim well after six months, but he was also rid of his dread to a large extent.

Douglas' quest of actually overcoming his fear to its slightest vestiges began at this point. He swam in the pool by himself. He went diving at Lake Wentworth. He attempted every stroke he could think of. Finally, during his diving expedition in Warm Lake, he entirely overcame his anxiety.

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 his experience?

Ans: Douglas describes his boyhood experience in the Y.M.C.A. pool for the readers to grasp the nature and scope of the dread. To a reader unfamiliar with Douglas' boyhood experience, the terror of being surrounded by water, the fear of placing his head in the water, the fear of choking, and the fear of his limbs turning numb could not have been explained. In that

situation, the author's (and his instructor's) extensive technique and the time it took him to learn or perfect even simple things, even when viewed through the lens of his fear of water, could not have been adequately appreciated. Douglas highlights the greater message he derives from his experience by quoting Roosevelt, "All we have to dread is fear itself." When he came face to face with death, or rather the threat of death, the value of life became clear to him.

TALKING ABOUT THE TEXT

1. **"All we have to fear is fear itself". Have you ever had a fear that you have now overcome? Share your experience with your partner.**

Ans: Directions: Everyone has faced and overcome some sort of fear. Consider a time in your life when you had a similar experience. It could be anything related to hobbies that you now enjoy but were previously afraid of.

Driving, skating, public speaking, competing, and overcoming stage fright are just a few examples. After you've located one such case in your life, think about why it bothered or scared you.

Recall the efforts you and/or others made to assist you in getting rid of it. Discuss the details of your experience with your classmate. Also, talk about how you felt when you realized you had completely overcome the fear.

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 IX, is an apt example of how courage and optimism helped a family survive under the direst stress.**

Ans: Hrithik Roshan, one of the most well-known and admired actors, suffered from stammering; he used to skip school during oral exams; he was skinny; he couldn't dance well; he resolved to succeed in his career and overcome his flaws; he went to speech therapy every day; he worked as an assistant director-spent hours in the gym - studied dancing - as a result of his patience and determination, he is now regarded as one of the most admired actors and dancers.

THINKING ABOUT LANGUAGE

1. If someone else had narrated Douglas' experience, how would it have differed from this account? Write out a sample paragraph or paragraphs from this text from the point of view of a third person or observer to find out which style of narration would you consider to be more effective? Why?

Ans: If the story had been told in the third person, the reader's emotional connection with the main protagonist and his dread of water would have been lost. The narrator would therefore be delivering the story passively from the viewpoint of an observer. The experience of drowning in water could never have adequately conveyed Douglas's "stark fear." The eighth and ninth paragraphs of a third-person narrative would be as follows: "He flailed at the surface of the water, swallowed, and choked." He tried to lift his legs, but they hung like lifeless weights, inflexible and immobile. He was being dragged under by a powerful force. He yelled, but only the water was aware of his scream. He had begun his long journey back to the pool's bottom. "As he slid down, he struck at the water, squandering his effort as though fighting an unstoppable force in a nightmare." He hadn't taken a breath in a long time. His lungs hurt. His head was throbbing. He was beginning to feel dizzy. But he remembered the plan: he'd jump from the pool's depths and float to the surface like a cork. He'd lie flat on the water, thrashing his legs and striking out with his arms. Then he'd make his way to the pool's edge and be safe."

As a result, the reader is only held captive by the first-person narrative. It makes the reader's experience more relevant and tangible. It engrosses him by allowing him to share the protagonist's experience. The desperation and helplessness of being in the Snorkeling, surface water, which has almost become fatal, the mental and physical agony of trying to survive the crisis, the long struggle to overcome the fear piece by piece, and the joy of conquering it at the end all make the reader feel like they are a part of the experience. Because the novel is told in the first person, the readers will find it to be a fast-paced and urgent read.

WRITING

1. Doing well in any activity, for example, a sport, music, dance or painting, riding a motorcycle or a car, involves a great deal of struggle. Most of us are very nervous, to begin with until gradually we overcome our fears and perform well.

Write an essay of about five paragraphs recounting such an experience. Try to recollect minute details of what caused the fear, your feelings, the encouragement you got from others or the criticism.

You could begin with the last sentence of the essay you have just read - "At last, I felt released - free to walk the trails and climb the peaks and to brush aside fear."

Ans: You may complete the essay by following the procedures outlined below:

1st paragraph Begin with, "At long last, I felt free - free to walk the trails, climb the summits, and brush away my worries." When fear is overcome, victory results. As well as a victory, arising from the acrimony of setbacks and failures enduring them for an extended period has its charm and purpose. Looking back, it appears to have been a long and arduous voyage that has now arrived at its destination."

Paragraph 2: Describe the beginning of the occurrence that caused you to be afraid. Attempt to write down what you saw, felt, and thought.

Gather information about the environment, people, and things in the area and write it down.

Paragraph 3: This is where you can continue discussing how the situation unfolded in terms of later events or occurrences. Describe the actual events in the sequence in which they occurred. You are free to discuss what went wrong and how the incident could have turned out differently.

Paragraph 4: In this paragraph, you may discuss how your fear has hampered you or how it has influenced other aspects of your life. Then write about the moment you chose to get rid of it. Discuss your plans, methods, and other factors that you may have considered to help you succeed in your endeavour.

Paragraph 5: In the final paragraph, you can summarise all of your (and others) efforts and conclude with an analysis of why you were able to overcome your fear.

2. Write a short letter to someone you know about your having learned to do something new.

Ans:

Examination
New Delhi
July 1, 20XX,

Hall

Dear Garima,

I hope you are well and happy when you receive this letter. This time, I've had something interesting to say. This summer, I learned to skate. Being able to skate is a fantastic experience that gives me a lot of self-assurance. Knowing that you've learned every technique and skill you'll need to master gives you a strange sense of strength. I could feel my spirits soar with a little more practice. I was initially terrified of even putting on my skates. But all the bruises, ailments, frustrations, and pessimistic thoughts that plagued me during some of the early training sessions pale in comparison to how I feel now. It gives me great pleasure to see myself virtually flying through the air. Skating also keeps me in shape. Even my parents are pleased to see me putting my time to good use.

Please inform me of your hobby classes.

Please convey my warmest greetings to Uncle and Aunt.

Yours affectionately,

Nishtha.

THINGS TO DO

Are there any water sports in India? Find out about the areas or places which are known for water sports.

Ans:

Water Sports	Places
River Rafting	Rishikesh, the River Teesta, and the Zaskar River in Ladakh

Water Skiing	Goa, Dal & Nagin Lake, Manasbal Lake, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep
Canoeing and Kayaking	Rishikesh, Teesta River, Goa, Mumbai, Dal Lake, Nagin Lake, Wular Lake
Scuba Diving	Andaman Islands, Dugong Reef, Havelock Island, Lakshadweep Islands
Snorkeling	Lakshadweep and Andaman and the Nicobar Islands
Angling and Fishing	Answers to the Deep Water Exercise and a Summary