

STUDY COURSE MATERIAL

ENGLISH

SESSION-2020-21

CLASS- IX

Ch 2- The Sound of Music.

Part I - (Evelyn Glennie Listens to Sound without Hearing It)

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Part I.

Word meanings.

1. Profoundly deaf: absolutely deaf.
2. specialist: a doctor specializing in a particular part of the body.
3. Deteriorated: worsened, reduces.
4. Urged: requested.
5. coveted: much desired
6. replicating: making a copy of something
7. yearning – longing, having a desire for something
8. devout: believing strongly in a religion and obeying its laws and following its practices

Summary.

Evelyn Glennie is a multi – percussionist. She has attained mastery over almost a thousand musical instruments despite being hearing – impaired. She learnt to feel music through the body instead of hearing it through the ears.

When Evelyn was eleven years old, it was discovered that she had lost her hearing power due to nerve damage. The specialist advised that she wear hearing aids and be sent to a school for the deaf. On the contrary, Evelyn was determined to lead a normal life and follow her interest in music. Although she was discouraged by her teachers, her potential was noticed by master percussionist, Ron Forbes. He guided Evelyn to feel music some other way than to hear it through her ears. This worked well for Evelyn and she realized that she could sense different sounds through different parts of her body.

Once she had overcome this hurdle, Evelyn began her career in music. She got admission in the Royal Academy of Music, London and scored the highest marks in the history of the academy. Evelyn says that hard work and dedication towards her goal helped her achieve success. Evelyn gives solo performances and even gives free concerts for hospitals and schools. In the year 1991, she won the Royal Philharmonic Society's prestigious 'Soloist of the Year' Award. Evelyn's story is an inspiration for the differently abled who are motivated to fulfil their dreams like she did.

Answer these questions in a few words or a couple of sentences each.

Question 1: How old was Evelyn when she went to the Royal Academy of Music?

Answer: She was 16 when she went for the audition of the Royal Academy of Music.

Question 2. When was her deafness first noticed? When was it confirmed?

Answer: Her deafness was first noticed when she was eight years old. When she turned 11, her deafness was confirmed.

Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (30–40 words)

Question 1: Who helped her to continue with music? What did he do and say?

Answer: It was a percussionist named Ron Forbes who spotted her potential in music. Everybody else discouraged her from pursuing music as they thought it impossible for a deaf person to learn music. Ron Forbes advised her to feel the music instead of listening it. He said her to feel it thorough her whole body.

Question 2: Name the various places and causes for which Evelyn performs.

Answer: Evelyn performs at music concerts. Apart from that she also performs at prison and hospitals. Through music she wants to spread the message of love and peace to prisoners and sick people.

Answer the question in two or three paragraphs (100–150 words)

1. How does Evelyn hear music?

Answer: Evelyn hears music through her whole body. In fact she just feels the music. She tries to feel the vibrations which create sound. While playing drums she uses her upper and lower body to feel vibrations from different types of drums. While playing xylophone she feels the music pulsating through her fingers. When she has to perform on wooden floors, she removes her shoes. This enables her to feel the vibrations through her bare feet. She even feels the music through her hair.

Part II.

The Shehnai of Bismillah Khan.

Word Meanings:

1. banned: prohibited
2. shrill: very sharp
3. unpleasant: something that you dislike
4. generic name: a name given to a class or group as a whole
5. Generic name means the scientific name or a broad classification of something
6. reeded: wind instruments which have reeds like the flute, the clarinet, etc.

Summary.

Bismillah Khan made a valuable contribution to the world of music through the 'shehnai'. For this, he was honoured with India's highest civilian honour – the Bharat Ratna in 2001. He hailed from a family of musicians. He improvised many new ragas with the shehnai and thus, placed it among other classical musical instruments. He won accolades on the international level too.

The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb banned the playing of the pungi in his royal court. He disliked the sound and so, the pungi was termed to be a noisemaker. A barber tried to improve the pungi's tone. He got a hollow stem, wider and longer than the pungi, made seven holes on it and blew into it, closing and opening the holes. It produced soft, melodious music. As this instrument had been developed by a barber called 'nai' in India and was played in the king's court called 'shah', the instrument was named 'shehnai'. The shehnai became a part of auspicious occasions. It was a part of the group of nine musical instruments that were played at the royal court.

Bismillah Khan was born at Dumraon, Bihar in 1916 into a family of musicians. His grandfather Rasool Bux Khan played the shehnai at the court of the king of Bhojpur. His father, Paigambar Bux and his paternal as well as maternal uncles were shehnai players. As a child, Bismillah Khan would visit the Bihariji temple to sing the Bhojpuri Chaita for which the king rewarded him with a laddu weighing 1.25kg. At the age of three, Bismillah Khan visited his maternal uncle, Ali Bux at Benaras. He saw him playing the shehnai and was fascinated by it. At the age of five, he started learning playing it. He would spend hours practicing, at the temple of Balaji and Mangala Maiya, by the banks of the holy river Ganga. The flowing waters of the river inspired him to improvise and Bismillah Khan invented ragas which were considered to be beyond the range of the shehnai.

At the age of fourteen, he performed at the Allahabad Music Conference and his talent was appreciated by Ustaaad Faiyaz Khan. In 1938, he started performing from the Lucknow station of the All India Radio. The day India gained independence, on 15th August 1947, Bismillah Khan performed from the Red Fort and greeted the country through his shehnai. He recited raag kafi which was followed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's famous 'Tryst with Destiny' speech.

Bismillah Khan performed all around the world. His first foreign performance was in Afghanistan where the king was so impressed that he gifted him many souvenirs. Bismillah Khan composed music for two films – Hindi film titled – 'Goonj Uthi Shehnai' directed by Vijay Bhatt and Kannada film titled – 'Sanadhi Apanna' by Vikram Srinivas.

He was the first Indian to perform at the Lincoln Centre Hall in the United States of America. He also performed at Montreal, Cannes and Tokyo. In Teheran, an auditorium was named after him – Tahar Mosiquee Ustaaad Bismillah Khan.

Ustaaad Bismillah Khan said that music was India's richest heritage and had to be taught to the children. Although he had travelled all over the world, he was attached to Dumraon and Benaras. Once a student asked him to set up a shehnai school in the USA and promised to recreate the temples of Benaras there. Bismillah Khan asked him whether he would transport the river Ganga also, as he was attached to it as well. Bismillah Khan is a true example of a secular Indian as being a Muslim, he played the shehnai at the Kashi Vishwanath temple. For him music was above religious barriers.

Answer these questions in 30–40 words.

Question 1: Why did Aurangzeb ban the playing of the pungi?

Answer: The pungi had an unpleasant shrill sound. Due to its irritating quality Aurangzeb banned the playing of pungi.

Question 2: How is a shehnai different from a pungi?

Answer: Shehnai is the refined version of pungi. A barber, who was a regular visitor to the king's palace, used a naturally hollow stems to put pungi's reed into and made shehnai. Shehnai had pleasant sound unlike pungi. As it was played by a barber (nai in Hindi) before the king (shah in Urdu) so it was given the name Shahnai.

3. Where was the shehnai played traditionally? How did Bismillah Khan change this?

Answer: Traditionally the Shehnai was played in temples and during wedding ceremonies, as it was considered an auspicious instrument. Bismillah Khan brought Shehnai into mainstream music and changed the way people perceived shehnai.

Question 4: When and how did Bismillah Khan get his big break?

Answer: In 1938, when All India Radio started, Bismillah Khan got the big break of performing for the All India Radio.

Question 5: Where did Bismillah Khan play the shehnai on 15 August 1947? Why was the event historic?

Answer: On 15th August 1947 Bismillah Khan played shehnai near the Red Fort in Delhi. It was the day when India became an independent nation. The gathering was full of eminent luminaries like Nehru and Gandhi.

Question 6: Why did Bismillah Khan refuse to start a shehnai school in the U.S.A.?

Answer: Bismillah Khan was in love with Benares and the Ganges flowing there. He used to get inspiration from the ambience of numerous ghats in Varanasi. He knew that he won't be able to get that ambience in the USA. So, he refused to start a shehnai school in the USA.