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ONLINE STUDY MATERIAL

SUBJECT- ENGLISH

SESSION-2020-21

CLASS-XII

CHAPTER/POEM: 3

Deep Water & Keeping Quiet

DAY-1

❖ STUDY MATERIAL

Chapter 3: Deep Water

By Alphonse Daudet

About the Author

William Orville Douglas (1898 –1980) was born in USA. Douglas was a leading advocate of individual rights. He was a judge at the Supreme Court of USA, retired in 1975 with a term lasting thirty-six years and remains the longest-serving Justice in the history of the court.

The following excerpt is taken from *Of Men and Mountains* by William O. Douglas.

Summary

The story has been taken from the author's autobiography- 'Of Men and Mountains'.

In this piece he tells about his fear of water and how he conquered it by determination and will power.

As a child, when he was 3 or 4 years old, he would go to the beach in California with his father. He would get scared by the might of the huge waves which swept over him and it instilled a fear in his sub – conscious mind.

A few years later, in his eagerness to learn swimming, he joined a swimming pool

where an incident further increased his terror. He was pushed into the pool by another boy and experienced death closely.

Many years after that incident, he stayed away from water but the desire to go fishing and swimming in nature was strong enough to motivate him to overcome his fear.

He learned swimming with the help of an instructor who ensured that William knew swimming well enough to be able to swim in huge lakes and waterfalls also.

Still, when he would swim, the fear from his childhood experiences, embedded in his sub-conscious mind would grip him over and over again. He wanted to conquer that fear.

He faced it sarcastically, thinking that now, as he knew how to swim, what harm could it do to him. He challenged his fear in the face of it and finally it would vanish.

It was a baseless fear instilled in his sub-conscious mind. This experience was valuable for him. He had experienced terror and death. He overcame it and finally conquered it.

William realized that death is peaceful and it is the fear of death that is terrorizing. His will to live life grew intensely as he had overcome his fear and started living fearlessly.

Characters & Places

- Douglas: Narrator of the story
- YMCA Pool: A swimming pool runs by Young Men's Christian Association
- Yakima: Yakima is a US city located about 60 miles southeast of Mount Rainier in Washington.

Gist of the lesson:

- William O. Douglas had a desire to learn swimming since childhood.
- At the age of three or four, he was knocked down and buried by a wave at a beach in California.
- He developed a great aversion to water.
- At the age of ten or eleven he decided to learn to swim with water wings at the Y.M.C.A pool since it was safe at the shallow end.
- A misadventure:- while sitting alone and waiting for others to come at the Y.M.C.A pool, a big boy came and threw Douglas into deep end of the pool.

- Douglas swallowed water and went straight down to the bottom of the pool.
- While going down he planned to make a big jump upwards but came up slowly. Tried to shout but could not.
- As he went down the pool second time, he tried to jump upwards but it was a waste of energy.
- Terror held him deeper and deeper.
- During the third trial he sucked water instead of air.
- Light was going out and there was no more panic.
- So he ceased all efforts and he became unconscious.
- He crossed to oblivion.
- When revived he found himself vomiting beside the pool.
- He was in grip of fear of water and it deprived him of the joys of canoeing, boating swimming and fishing.
- Hired an instructor to learn swimming.
- The instructor taught him swimming piece by piece.
- He went to different lakes to swim and found tiny vestiges of fear still gripped him.
- He challenged the fear and swam.
- Swimming up and down the Warm Lake he finally overcame his fear of water.
- He realized that in death there is peace and there is terror only in fear of death.

DAY-2

Deep Water Question and Answers

Q1. 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. William describes his experience where he had a close brush with death at the Y.M.C.A. Swimming pool. As it a first-person account, he has described it deeply. The emotional, mental and physical struggle and the paralyzing fear of drowning have been discussed in detail.

William retained his intelligence and had a plan to come to the surface. He tried it but it did not work and after a few trials to save his life, death dawned upon him. All these details make the description vivid.

Q2. How did Douglas overcome his fear of water?

Ans. William Douglas was not able to come out of his fear. So, he hired a swimming instructor. Once he had learned swimming, he wanted to check if he had overcome the fear as well. He would swim in lakes and found the fear to return in small phases. William was no longer scared as he knew that he could swim. Hence, he overcame the fear.

Q3. 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?

Ans. William Douglas gives a detailed description of his childhood experience so that the reader gets familiar with the kind of fear that he had as a child.

When he quotes Roosevelt "“All we have to fear is fear itself” he tries to draw a larger meaning from this experience. He wants to highlight the fact that life became meaningful and the desire to live grew intense once he had conquered his fear.

Q4. How did Douglas develop an aversion to water?

Or

What happened at the YMCA swimming pool which instilled fear of water in Douglas' mind?

Ans. Since the age of three or four, when the author accompanied his father to the beach, he realized that he disliked water. He would get frightened by the power of the waves which threw him, swept over and he was buried in water.

Later, at the age of ten – eleven years, he decided to learn swimming. He joined swimming classes at a swimming pool at the Y.M.C.A. He felt that the swimming pool was safe. Also, the pair of water wings would help him stay on the surface but more, they instilled a sense of confidence in him. It was just when he had started feeling comfortable that an incident took place. A big boy picked up the author and threw him in the pool at the deep end. He got water in his mouth and sank to the bottom. He was frightened but kept his mind working and devised a way out but things did not turn out as planned. His lungs felt as if they would burst, he was overpowered by fear, reached out, as if to grab something, but could only get his hands on the water. He got suffocated due to lack of air, could not scream, moved his arms desperately but all his efforts failed and he once again sank to the bottom of the pool. An unexplainable terror seized him. His limbs were lifeless, rigid due to fear and he could not even scream, the only sign of life was his heart beat. He sucked in water and then suddenly all his efforts to save himself stopped. He was relaxed, peaceful, fearless and sleepy, almost dead.

It was due to these experiences that the author developed an aversion to water.

Q5. Describe the efforts made by Douglas to overcome his fear of water.

Ans. Douglas was in the tight grip of a fear of swimming in water bodies and finally decided to get rid of it. He hired an instructor who taught him swimming piece by piece and when he had learnt it all, he combined all the pieces together and made Douglas a swimmer. Still, he was not confident, and the terror would seize him time and again. Douglas wanted to get rid of all the fear, he wanted to conquer it. So, he went to various lakes, dived and swam across them. He reverted sarcastically to the tiny vestiges of fear that would grip him time and again until all of it vanished away. Douglas realized that fear was merely a crop of the mind and once he had conquered it, he felt released, free to walk arduous terrains, climb peaks and brush aside fear. Douglas had faced stark terror and then by conquering it his desire to live life grew intensely.

❖ VIDEO-LINK

Link: https://youtu.be/8el_zv4CYCM

DAY-3

Chapter 3: Keeping Quiet

By Pablo Neruda

About the Poet

Pablo Neruda (1904 – 1973) was the 'pen name' and later, 'legal name' of this famous Chilean poet – diplomat – politician. He won the Noble prize for literature in the year 1971. He wrote in green ink which was his personal symbol for desire and hope. His writings are simple, wherein lies their beauty.

Originally written in Spanish, the essence of this poem is based on introspection and retrospection. The poet feels that some soul – searching is needed for us to be at peace with ourselves and others.

Rhyme scheme of the poem

The poem is written in free verse. It does not follow any rhyme scheme.

Summary

“Keeping Quiet” is a peace poem written by the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. The poet asks humanity to count numbers from one to twelve - twelve being the number of hours shown in a clock or the number of zodiac signs. He requests everyone not to speak because languages create barriers between people. The moment when everyone stops moving their body will be very special and different as we have never experienced such a moment before.

The poet says that in this period of inactivity the fishermen would not harm the whales, the salt gatherers will not hurt their hands, those who are busy destroying the nature will adopt a new approach towards life, The men who are preparing for wars and victory based on deaths of innocent people will join their enemy and stand in unity with them, doing nothing. No one will harm himself or any other person. Everyone will unite and ponder upon his acts and realize the results of his deeds.

The poet clarifies his idea and says further that he does not want that people should stand idle. He wants that there should be no war because he does not want to see trucks laden with dead bodies of the soldiers. He is promoting Universal brotherhood and peace.

The poet says that everyone is working continuously, to achieve one’s goals. People are threatened by death and the fear forces them to work endlessly so that they can achieve everything quickly. In this mad rush, they do not realize the repercussions of their acts. He wants us to pause and come out of the mad rush. He wants us to be happy about our achievements and celebrate them. He wants us to overcome the fear of death and to relax for a while. We should know the results of our deeds and celebrate our achievements.

When the people will remain quiet for a while, they will realize the purpose of their lives. Just like all the creations of nature undergo a rebirth with the change of seasons, similarly, keeping quiet will be a rebirth for the human soul. It will give a new meaning to our life. Again, the poet says that he will count till twelve and asks everyone to remain quiet while he leaves.

Keeping Quiet Explanation

- The poet asks everyone to count up to twelve in their mind. The number twelve represents the hours of the day or the months of a year.
- He wants all of us to be calm and still.
- People across the nations have to unite together, so, they shall not speak their own languages, rather they all shall keep quiet and speak the language of silence.
- This will bring unity among all the humans on the face of the Earth.
- For at least one moment, no one shall move his arms either to signal, or to fight, or argue with each other.

Literary Devices:

Assonance: Use of vowel sound 'o' and 'e' (Now we will count to twelve, not move our arms so much)

Anaphora: Two consecutive lines starting with the word 'Let's'

let's not speak in any language,

let's stop for one second,

Alliteration: the repetition of a consonant sound at the start of 2 or more closely placed words.

'we will' - 'w' sound is repeated

DAY-5

Questions and Answers

Q1- What will counting upto twelve and keeping still help us achieve?

A1-If we count upto twelve and keep still, it will give us some time to analyze our deeds. It will allow us some moments to think about the result of our activities. People in the world are involved in wars and are also damaging the environment in order to achieve their aims. Unfortunately this is taking all of us toward our own end. So, we need to think in order to achieve peace and harmony.

Q2- Do you think the poet advocates total inactivity and death?

A2- No, the poet doesn't advocate total inactivity and death. He clarifies this in his

poem that he wants all the people to just stop for a while in order to analyze their activities and their consequences. He wants human beings not to support war and damage to the environment.

Q3- What is the 'sadness' that the poet refers to in the poem?

A3- The sadness is the result of our own actions and deeds. According to the poet we all are in a hurry of achieving various tasks in our life. This rush sometimes proves dangerous for us. As we don't analyze our actions, so we land ourselves in a number of problems. These problems then become the reason for our sadness as referred to in the poem.

Q4- What symbol from Nature does the poet invoke to say that there can be life under apparent stillness?

A4- The poet takes the example of earth to prove that there can be life under apparent stillness. The earth never gets inactive. We experience the change in the seasons which brings so many different things with it. In winters, things come to a standstill as the water bodies freeze; the trees shed their leaves, etc. But as soon as the spring season comes, it brings with it the lovely flowers, flowing rivers and a new life is given to the nature. So, the poet wants to convey that we should stay calm but that doesn't mean that it will bring total inactivity and stillness.

❖ VIDEO-LINK

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vd5vTHcfFoE>