NCERT SOLUTIONS

CLASS - 11th



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Class : 11th
Subject : English
Chapter : 1
Chapter Name : The Portrait Of A Lady by Khushwant Singh

Q1 The three phases of the author's relationship with his grandmother before he left the country to study abroad.

Answer. The author had shared a very amiable bond with his grandmother since his childhood. However, their relationship evolved with time into three phases.
The first phase brings out the most loving moments caught between them. That was the golden time he spent with his only guardian 'grandmother' in a village where she used to take care of him entirely.
The second phase marked a turning point in their relationship when they both were called on to a city by the author's parents. They still shared a room but grandmother barely talked to the author as his involvement into modern science and music swizzed her deeply.
The third phase starts when the author was admitted into a University and was given a separate room for him. This marked a complete seclusion of grandmother from her grandchild. They no more shared an active bond as they used to in the village.

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Q2 Three reasons why the author's grandmother was disturbed when he started going to city school.

Answer. As described by the author, his grandmother had always been a spiritual lady with high values and principles. Her fascination with the holy scriptures made her to dislike the modern science as it questions the existence of God. The three main reasons which left her disappointed are;

1. The complete alienation of lessons from holy scriptures in the education system.
2. The purview of modern science that completely outshone the traditional way of learning.
3. She never believed music is worth learning for the dignified section of society. When she came to know about the author being given music lessons at school, she was perturbed badly.

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Q3 Three ways in which the author's grandmother spent her days after he grew up.

Answer. After their migration to the city, the relationship between the author and his grandmother started to become passive. The author onset a new journey with his admission to a modern school, thus the grandmother was completely secluded from his life. She could no

more help him in his advanced studies, she could no longer accompany him to his school but spend her entire time at home. Here are the three ways she would spend her time doing;

1. Being rosary beads her best comrade, now the grandmother would spend more time in reciting prayers.
2. Spinning wheel was the new activity she indulged herself in.
3. In the afternoon, she would sit in the verandah feeding innumerable sparrows with the bread crumbs.
   These were the activities she would pass her entire day with.

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Q4 The odd way in which the author's grandmother behaved just before she died.

Answer. Her peculiar behavior had set off in the evening after the homecoming of the author when she thumped a 'sagging dilapidated drum' and sang for hours without even bothering about her health.
The next day she fell ill and felt her demise was near. With this, she stopped talking to her family members against their protest and chose to recite prayers while moving rosary beads in her hands.
After a while, she entered into a new world.
Her entire behavior since the previous evening till her demise was much strange to the author and other family members.

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Q5 The way in which the sparrows expressed their sorrow when the author's grandmother died.

Answer. The grandmother's death not only brought grief to her family members but to thousands of sparrows as well which were her best company after her relationship with the author abated. When the family members mourned in silence, sparrows expressed their grief by neglecting the bread crumbs given to them by the author's mother.
They perched on the grandmother's leg, sit on her head with melodious chirruping when she used to feed them. But after her demise they sat scattered on the floor with complete silence as they were deeply hurt inside. When the corpse of the grandmother was carried away they flew with it silently.

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Q1 The author's grandmother was a religious person. What are the different ways in which we come to know this?

Answer. Undoubtedly the grandmother was a religious and highly spiritual lady. Her fascination towards the religion has been described by the author in many ways. Some of the instances inspired from her religious attitude are;

1. She would accompany the author to the school and sit inside the temple reciting prayers from the holy scriptures everyday.
2. She had immense compassion for animals, as she would feed stray dogs everyday on their way back home after school in the village and sparrows in the city.
3. She was highly disappointed when she heard of alienation of the lessons from holy scriptures in the modern school.
4. After migrating to the city, she would devote more time in reciting the prayers rather than talking to someone.
5. Even before her death when she felt her end was near, she chose to communicate with God with her prayers rather than the family members.

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Q2 Describe the changing relationship between the author and his grandmother. Did their feelings for each other change?

Answer. The relationship of shared by the author and his grandmother had been dynamic all through their lives. From being the village residents to city dwellers, their relationship went through many changes. The time when they shared a beautiful, loving and active bond was the one they spent in the village. Aftermath their migration to the city, it all became passive. They still shared a room but grandmother no longer accompanied him to the school and the modern education system pissed her off completely. That was the time when their conversations became rarer to rarest when the author was given a separate room to live in.
There relationship was hovered by many disappointments. But the feelings and love for each other never changed in either of them.

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Q3 Would you agree that the author's grandmother was a person strong in character? If yes, give instances that show this.

Answer. Yes, the author's grandmother was an absolute idol of strong character. Strong character is something found in those with splendid hearts, and there are many instances that show Grandmother being the one;

1. Her immense love and compassion for stray dogs and sparrows, depicts her humanitarian behavior.
2. Her fondness of Religion makes her life affected by it, which is indeed a manifestation of living a highly principled life.

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Q4 Have you known someone like the author's grandmother? Do you feel the same sense of loss with regard to someone whom you have loved and lost?

Answer. Yes. The author's grandmother had been a very religious lady which is a major trait almost all the grandmothers across the world possess.
My Grandmother shares it as well, and my love for her is equally indispensable as it was for author towards his grandmother.

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Q1 Which language do you think the author and his grandmother used while talking to each other?

Answer. People generally communicate in their mother-tongue with their family, since the author was Punjabi , they might have communicated in the same.

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Q2 Which language do you use to talk to elderly relatives in your family?

Answer. Students ought to answer this.

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Q3 How would you say 'a dilapidated drum' in your language?

Answer. This must be answered by the students, know its meaning in your mother tongue. In Hindi it would be , 'phata hua dholak'

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Q4 Can you think of a song or poem in your language that talks of homecoming?

Answer. Students ought to answer this.

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QI Notice the following uses of 'tell' in the text.

Given below are four different senses of the word 'tell'. Match the meanings to the uses listed above.
i) make something known to someone in spoken or written words.

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ii) count while reciting
iii) be sure
iv) give information to somebody

Answer.

1) At her age one could never tell.
2) She told us that her end was near.
3) Her fingers were busy telling the beads of her rosary.
4) I would tell her English words and little things of Western science and learning.

The match is;

i) make something known to someone- 4) I would tell her English words and little things of Western science and learning.
ii) count while reciting - 3) Her fingers were busy telling the beads of her rosary.
iii) be sure - 1) At her age one could never tell
iv)give information to somebody - 2) She told us that her end was near.

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QII Notice different senses of the word 'take'.
i) to take to something: to begin to do something as a habit
ii) to take ill: to suddenly become ill
Locate these phrases in the text and notice the way they are used.

Answer. i) "..she took to feeding sparrows.." indicates the use of 'take to' in the sense of acquiring a habit.
ii) "The next morning she was taken ill" indicates the meaning 'to suddenly become ill'.

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QIII The word 'hobble' means to walk with difficulty because the legs and feet are in bad condition. Tick the words in the box below that also refer to a manner of walking.

Haggle, Shuffle, Stride, Ride, Waddle, Wriggle, Paddle, Swagger, Trudge , Slog

Answer. The words that also refer to a manner of walking are: shuffle, stride, waddle, slog, paddle, swagger, trudge.

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