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CLASS - X

ENGLISH

First Flight

CHAPTER - 2

NELSON MANDELA
LONG WALK TO FREEDOM

Part – 5

Thinking about the Text

Nipa Das

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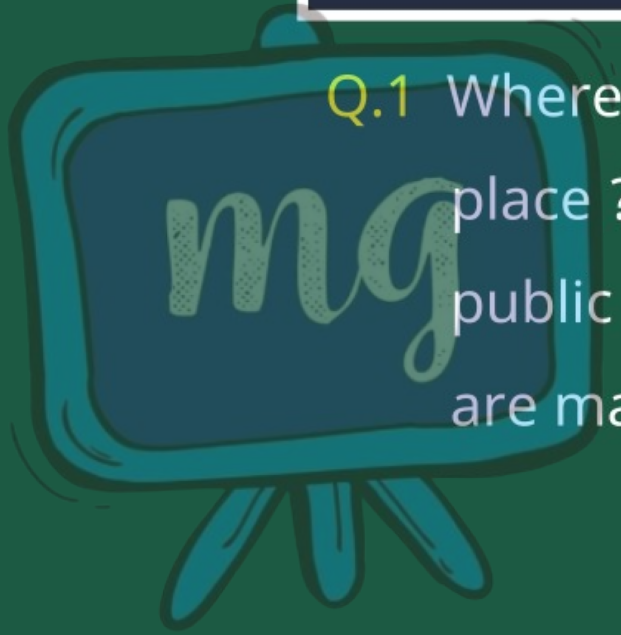
COMPREHENSION CHECK



Q.1 Where did the ceremonies take place ? Can you name any public buildings in India that are made of sandstone ?

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Ans. The ceremonies took place in the lovely sandstone amphitheatre. It was formed by the Union Buildings in Pretoria. The public buildings in India that are made of sandstone are: the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, North and South Blocks, Parliament House etc.

Q.2 Can you say how 10 May is an 'autumn day' in South Africa ?



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Ans. 10th May is an 'autumn day' in South Africa because of the weather and the dawning of freedom after a long period of time from the white rule.



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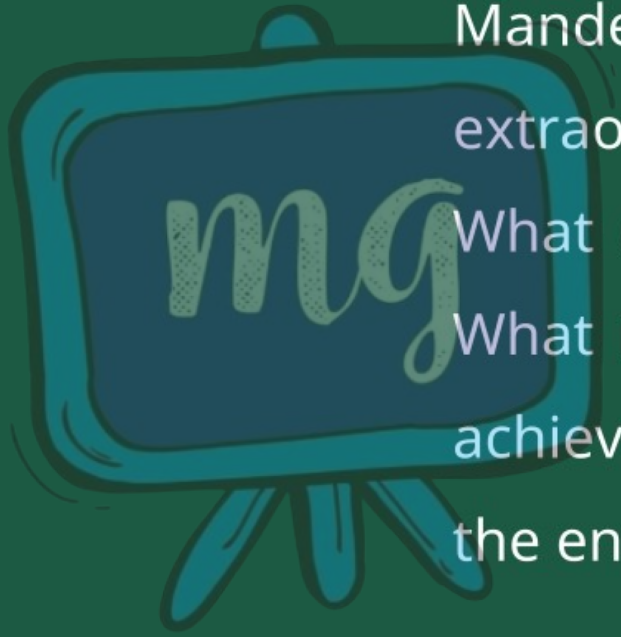
Q.3 At the beginning of his speech, Mandela mentions 'an extraordinary human disaster'. What does he mean by this ? What is the 'glorious... human achievement' he speaks of at the end ?



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Ans. At the beginning of his speech, Mandela mentions 'an extraordinary human disaster'. By this he means the white rule in South Africa over the blacks. It lasted very long. It was really a disaster because it deprived the blacks of their basic human rights and dignity.

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He is talking about 'Apartheid', that is a political system that separates people according to their race.

'The glorious... Human achievement' is getting political independence from the white rule by the black natives and the formation of first democratic, non racial government

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Q.4 What does Mandela thank the international leaders for ?



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Ans. He thanked the international leaders for coming to witness the installation of the first democratic and non-racial government . It was a common victory for justice, peace and human dignity.

Q.5 What ideals does he set out for the future of South Africa ?



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Ans. He sets out the ideals of liberating his people from various bondages. These are of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discriminations.

Q.6 What do the military generals do ? How has their attitude changed, and why ?



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Ans. The military generals saluted Mandela and pledged their loyalty. Their attitude changed because earlier they also followed the white supremacy and because of that they once arrested Mandela, when he was protesting against it.

But now in the newly formed government they were loyal to the president and the Republic.

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Q.7 Why were two national anthems sung ?



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Ans. Two national anthems were sung as there were two main communities or races - the whites and the blacks. One was of the whites and the other of the blacks. The Black people sung the national anthem of white people and the white people sung the national anthem of black people.

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Both anthems were sung to present the oneness, unity, integration between the two races.



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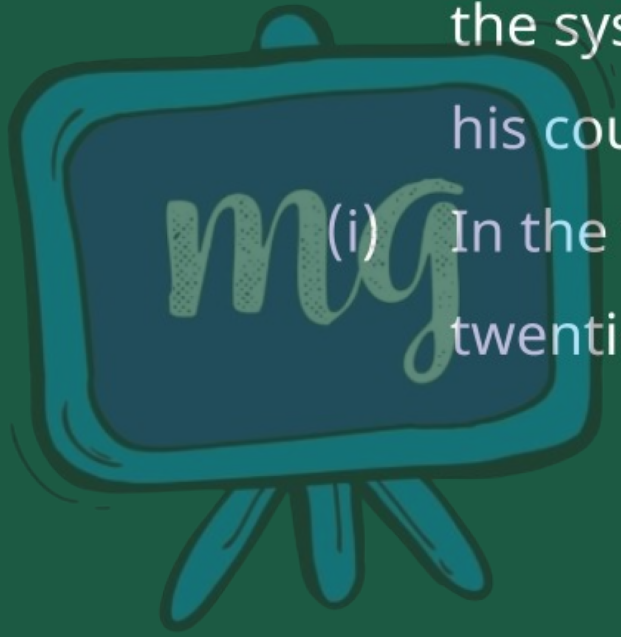
Q.8 How does Mandela describe the systems of government in his country.

(i) In the first decade of the twentieth century



(1901–1910)

Ans. In the first decade of the twentieth century the whites of South Africa patched up their differences. They built a system of racial domination against the black people of their own land. They created 'Apartheid' a political system that separates people according to their races.

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(ii) In the final decade, of the twentieth century?



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Ans. In the last decade their system had been overturned forever. It was replaced by another. It recognised the rights and freedoms of all people regardless of their skin colour. Now there was a democratic, non-racial government.

Q.9 What does courage mean to Mandela ?



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Ans. By courage Mandela means not the absence of fear but the triumph over it.



Q.10 Which does he think is natural, to love or to hate ?



Ans. He thinks that love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite hate.



Q.11 What 'twin obligation' does Mandela mention ?



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Ans. Mandela mentions the twin obligations. One, obligation to his family, his parents, his wife and children. Second, obligation to his people, his community and his country.

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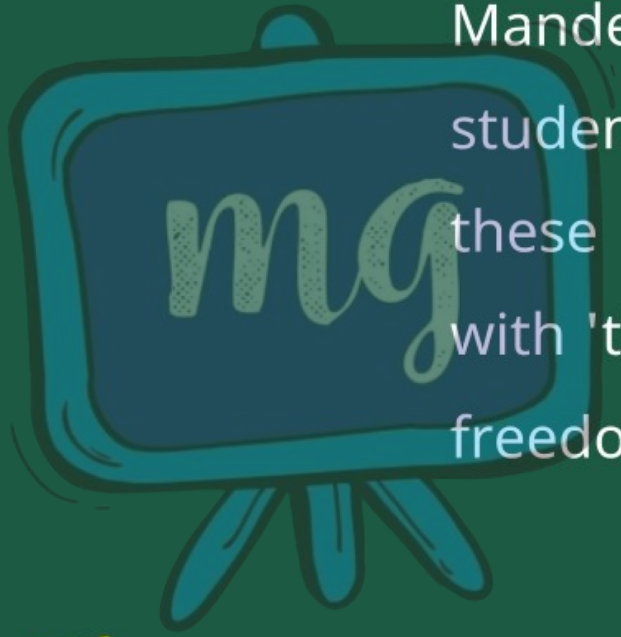
Q.12 What did being free mean to Mandela as a boy, and as a student? How does he contrast these 'transitory freedoms' with 'the basic and honourable freedoms'?



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Ans. As a boy Mandela meant by being free was to wander in the fields near his hut. It was to swim and to run through the village. Also it was to roast mealies at night and to ride the bulls.

As a student freedom meant to be free to stay out at night.

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It was to read what he pleased to read and to go where he chose. These were the 'transitory freedoms'. But the 'basic and honourable freedoms' were the freedoms for the people. These were to live with dignity and self-respect.

Q.13 Does Mandela think the oppressor is free? Why/Why not ?



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Ans. Mandela thinks that the oppressor is not free like the oppressed. A person who takes away another man's freedom is a prisoner of hatred. He is locked in prejudice and narrow-mindedness. So for him both the oppressed and the oppressor are robbed of their humanity.

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Q.14 Why did such a large number of international leaders attend the inauguration? What did it signify the triumph of ?



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Ans. A large number of international leaders attended the inauguration to pay their respects to the newly formed government that was freely and fairly elected. It signified the triumph of human freedom and democracy. It also signified the importance of political independence.

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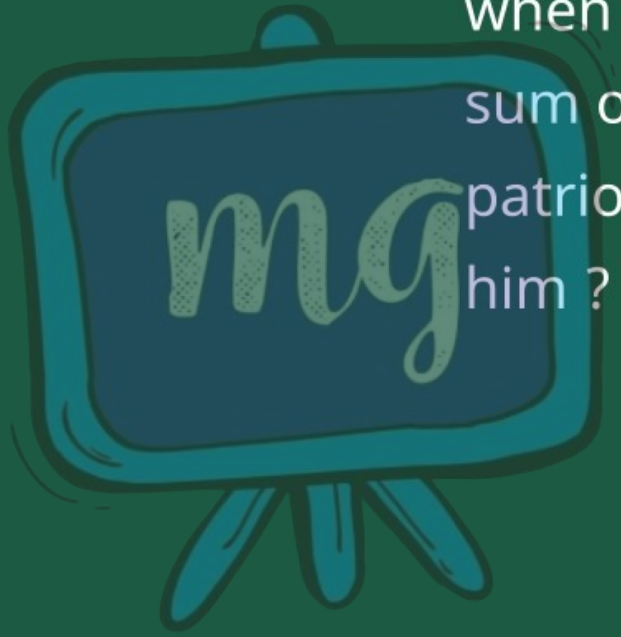
Q.15 What does Mandela mean when he says he is 'simply the sum of all those African patriots' who had gone before him ?



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Ans. By saying that he is simply the sum of all those African Patriots, Mandela wants to pay his tribute to all the people who have sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom. He is grateful to those who had gone before him, because they were the people who guided him on the path of freedom.

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He could form a non-racial government and bring freedom and equality to all people just because of those patriots.

Q.16 Would you agree that the 'depths of oppression' create 'heights of character'? How does Mandela illustrate this?



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Ans. It is a fact that the more one is oppressed, the more one becomes strong in character. Mandela says that the decades of oppression and brutality produced many patriots. They were like Oliver Tambos, Walter Sisulus, Chief Luthulis, Yusuf Dadoos etc.

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Q.17 How did Mandela's understanding of freedom change with age and experience ?



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Ans. First, Mandela thought of personal freedom like doing what one liked. As he grew older, freedom to raise a family and freedom to earn his livelihood started in his mind. Later he realised freedom as indivisible.

He understood that he should try not only for his freedom

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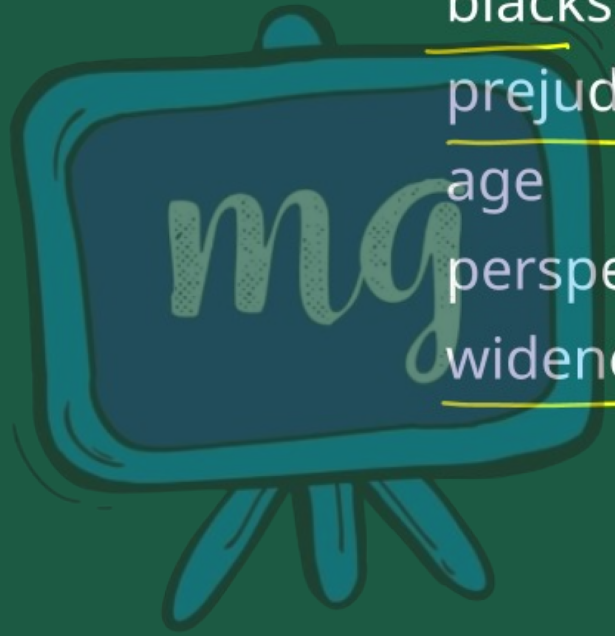
but the freedom for all the blacks, freedom from fear and prejudice. So we can say with age and experience his perspective about freedom widened.



Q.18 How did Mandela's 'hunger for freedom' change his life ?



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Ans. Mandela's 'hunger for freedom' changed him into a great man, a statesman and a visionary. He joined the African National Congress and this changed him from a frightened young man into a bold one who fought against racial prejudice.