



Grade VI

Prose 5. A Different kind of school

Summary of the Chapter

The writer was Curious to Know about Miss Beam's School

This story is about a school which has different way of teachings humanitarian values to students. The writer visited a school as he had heard a lot about it. He wanted to meet Miss Beam. Miss Beam was a middle-age lady. Her hair was beginning to turn grey. She had a plump figure. Though she was quite authoritative, but was a kind and helpful lady.

The Writer Saw a Girl whose Eyes were Covered with a Bandage

After arriving in the school, the writer saw a girl of about 12 years of age. Her eyes were covered with a bandage and she was being helped by a little boy aged 8. She asked the boy about the writer and then they passed on. Miss Beam said the real aim of the school was to teach thoughtfulness and kindness towards others. The students should become responsible citizens. They learn through interaction and interesting talks, during which they have to sit still and keep quiet.

Miss Beam Told the Writer to Look Outside the Window for Reasons

The writer said he could see beautiful grounds and cheerful children. But they were not looking healthy and active. He said he saw a poor little girl with some vision problem, when he arrived in the school. There are two more girls with the same difficulty. There was also a girl with a crutch, watching other children at play.

She said the girl was not lame but it was a lame day for her. The other girls were not blind but it was blind day for them. This is a vital part of the education system, which makes the children appreciate and understand misfortune. Each term every child has one blind day, one lame day, one deaf day, one injured day and one dunmb day, so that they could feel the misfortunes of others.



During the blind day their eyes are bandaged and they were not allowed to see. They needed help from others. Others children are given the duty to help them. All the children learn a lot from this way. Everyone is very kind and learn what misfortune is at the end of the day.

The Writer Asks for Children's Opinion about the Teaching Methods

Miss Beam asked the writer to come to the garden and see himself how the children feel about the unique teaching methods. The writer asked a girl if she ever peeded and she answered in negative, saying it would be cheating. The writer found it awful to be blind. The children said their helpers were fine and those who have been blind already will be the best helpers.

A student shared the experience about being lame and hopping about on a crutch. She said it was troublesome when her arm was tied up. She said she could manage being deaf but it is difficult to be blind as one is afraid of getting hurt.

The Writer Discovered a Lot and Became Thoughtful

The writer walked towards a house with a girl and started telling her about things and people around them. Miss Beam was walking with Millie. The girl gave full description about Millie. The writer told her about an old man typing up roses. He was the gardener. Then came Anita on crutches.

The writer gradually discovered that he was ten times more thoughtful and realised that he could also describe about things and people in better way. The writer later told Miss Beam that he was sorry to leave them. He wanted to spend more time with Miss Beam and the other children. Miss Beam acknowledged that her system then must be useful for children as. It has impressed the writer also.

A. Put these sentences from the story in the right order and write them out in a paragraph. Don't refer to the text.

- I shall be so glad when today is over.
- Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun, I guess.
- I don't think I will mind being deaf for a day- at least not much.
- But being blind is so frightening.
- Only you must tell me about things.
- Let's go for a little walk.
- The other bad days can't be half as bad as this.

Ans. Let's go for little walk. Only you must tell me about things. I shall be so glad when today is over. The other bad days can't be half as bad as this. Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun, I guess. I don't think I will mind being deaf for a day - at least not much. But being blind is so frightening.

B. Answer the following questions.

1. Why do you think the writer visited Miss Beam's school?

Ans. So many people have talked or written about Miss Beam school. So, visited the school to get overall experience about the school.

2. What was the 'game' that every child in the school had to play? (9)

Ans. Every child in the school has to play as given the task of the role of being blind, deaf, dumb, lame and injured once in a term. It was kind of game to make them aware about misfortune.

3. "Each term every child has one blind day, one lame day..." Complete the line. Which day was the hardest? Why was it the hardest? (9,11,15)

Ans. "Each term every child has one has one blind day, one lame day, one deaf day, one injured day and one dumb day." Being blind was the hardest day because the students were afraid. They might fall down or hurt themselves.

4. What was the purpose of these special days? (5,9)

Ans. The purpose of these special days was to make the children appreciate misfortune. Thus they learnt to help those who suffered such misfortunes.

Working with Language

A. Match the words and phrases with their meanings in the box below.

Paragraph numbers

1. Homesick (3)
2. Practically (4)
3. It pains me (7)
4. Appreciate (9)
5. Thoughtless (10)
6. Exercise (11)
7. Relief (13)
8. Ghastly (14)

Almost, it hurts me, terrible, test the strength of, understaing the difficulties, wanting to be home, a welcome change, not very caring

Ans.

1. Homesick - wanting to be home
2. Practically - almost
3. It pains me - it hurts me
4. Appreciate - understanding the difficulties
5. Thoughtless - not very caring
6. Exercise - test the strenght of
7. Relief - a welcome change
8. Ghastly - terrible

B. Re-word these lines from the story

1. I had heard a great deal about Miss Beam's school
2. Miss Beam was all that i had expected – middle – aged, full of authority.
3. I went to the window which overlooked a lardge garden.
4. "We cannot bandage the children's mouths, so they really have to exercise their will-power."

Ans.

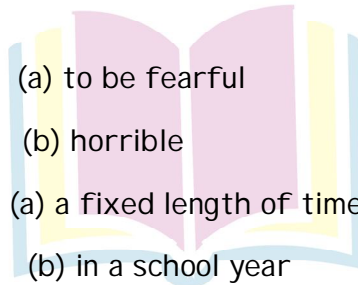
1. The writer had heard good reviews about the teaching methods at Miss Beam's school.
2. The writer found Miss Beam to be a middle-aged and authoritative woman.
3. The writer looked out of the window and saw a large garden.
4. The children's mouth can not be bandaged so they have to learn to keep quiet.....

C. 1. Given below is a page from a dictionary (from NCERT page 64). Look at it carefully and

- (i) Find a word which means the same as *ghastly*. Write down the word and its two meanings.
- (ii) Find a word meaning a *part of the school year*.
- (iii) Find a word that means *examination*.

Ans.

- (i) Terrible - (a) to be fearful
(b) horrible
- (ii) Term - (a) a fixed length of time
(b) in a school year
- (iii) Test - (a) to look at something to see if it is correct or will work properly.
(b) to ask someone questions



2. Now make lists of

- (i) All the words on the page (plus any more that you can think of) that begin with terr-
- (ii) Five words that may follow the last word on the page, that.
- (iii) Write down your own meaning of the word thank. Then write down the meaning given in the dictionary.

Ans.

- (i) Terrace, terrible, terror, territory, terrain, terrorist, terrestrial, terrifying.
- (ii) Those, there, the, than, this.
- (iii) Be for any help and glad, to say we are grateful to someone for any help

D. A poem for you to read

All but Blind
In his chambered hole
Gropes for worms
The four-clawed Mole.

All but Blind
In the evening sky
That hooded Bat
Twirls softly by.

All but blind
In the burning day
The Barn Owl blunders
On her way.

And blind as are



These three to me,
So, blind to Someone

I must be. - Walter De La Mare

Speaking and Writing

A. Make a short list of things you find difficult to do.

For example:

Pic1

Pic2

Turning a somersault

Threading a needle

Compare your list with the others' in the class. Can you explain why you find these things difficult to do?

Ans. Do this activity in your class

B. **Look at your hands carefully. Now, write down for each finger one action for which that finger is particularly important. For example, the second (or index) finger helps to hold the knife down firmly when cutting.**

Ans. First finger: to warn somebody and point something

Middle finger: to hold things

Ring finger: for putting on the ring

Little finger: for making a fist

Chapter Practice

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. **Write about the appearance of Miss Beam.**

Miss Beam was a middle-aged lady, full of authority yet kindly. Her hair was turning grey and she was slightly fat.

2. What was the purpose/objective of Miss Beam's school?

The real aim of the school was not to teach various subjects but to teach thoughtfulness and make the students kind and responsible citizens.

3. "This is only her lame day." What does this mean?

It means the girl is lame only for that day and it was her turn to be lame. This exercise will make her thoughtful and kind about these who are actually lame.

4. Who are helpers in the story?

Many children are given duty to help other children who are deaf, dumb or blind for the day. Such children are called helpers.

5. Who is Millie?

Millie is the head girl of the Miss Beam's school with very light hair. She was wearing a blue cotton skirt and a pink blouse.

6. What type of learning methods were use in Miss Beam School?

The learning methods do not invite. Usual simple spelling, adding, subtracting, multiplying and uniting. They have to learn how to be a responsible citizen.

7. How did children prepare themselves for the blind day?

During the blind day, children's eyes were bandaged and they were advised not to peep. The bandage was put on overnight so they wake up blind.

Short Answer Type Questions

1. What did the author see out of the window?

The author saw beautiful grounds and a lot of jolly children .
The children were not looking healthy and active. He saw girls with poor eyesight and other problems.

2. What used to happen on the blind day?



During the blind day, student's eyes were bandaged completely and they were not allowed to peep. The bandage is put on overnight so they wake up blind.

3. Why dumb day is the most difficult?

The dumb days is the most difficult because bandage cannot be put on the children's mouth and they have to exercise their will-power to be silent throughout the day.

4. Who was Miss Beam?

Miss Beam was the owner of the school. She was a middle-aged, full of authority, yet kindly and very understanding lady. Her hairs were grey and she had a plump figure. Her school taught students how to become responsible citizens.

Long Answer Type Questions

1. How was Miss Beam's school different from other schools? What was the difference between Miss Beam's school and the other schools?

Miss Beam's school was different from other school because it teaches moral values, thoughtfulness and kindness apart from general study while all the other schools focus on teaching subjects.

According to the school, it was important for children to understand misfortune and suffering of others. The school makes them share the misfortune of others in order to make them responsible citizens. The teaching methods of the school were different from other school and children used to follow all the instructions given to them.

2. Who was ten times more thoughtful than ever? Give reasons.

The writer, who visited Miss Beam's school, discovered that he had become ten times more thoughtful after getting the first-hand experience of the school.



He saw a girl whose eyes were covered with a bandage and she was led by a little boy. He was told that it was her blind day.

The writer understood that every child must undergo some kind of suffering to understand misfortune. Many children were given the duty of helping the other children who were blind, deaf, dumb and lame for the day. The writer learnt a lot from their experience.

Value Based Questions

Do you think the teaching methods of Miss Beam's school were correct? Give reasons to support your answer.

Yes, the teaching methods of Miss Beam's were correct and appropriate. Each term every child has one blind day, one lame day, one deaf day, one injured day and one dumb day in the school. This method will make them undergo pain and suffering and this is how they will understand misfortune.

The children needed help with everything and other children are given the duty of helping them and leading them about. All the children learn many things with this teaching technique. This will make them responsible and better citizen.

Extract Based Questions

Extract 1

Directions (Q. Nos. 1-6) Read the extract given below and answer the following questions.

"This is a very important part of our system. To make our children appreciate and understand misfortune, we make them share in misfortune too. Each term every



child has one blind day, one lame day, one deaf day, one injured day and one dumb day. During then blind day their eyes are bandaged absolutely and they are on their honour not to peep.

The bandage is put on overnight so they wake blind. This means that they need help with everything. Other children are given the duty of helping them and leading them about. They all learn so much this way-both the blind and the helpers.

1. What is the most important part of the school system?

The important part of the school system was to make children appreciate and understand misfortune and share it.

2. What was taught to the children?

The children were taught honesty about not to peep when they were andaged.

3. What was done overnight?

During the blind day, the bandaged was put on overnight to make the children wake blind.

4. Find synonym for the word 'misfortune'.

- (a) Glad (b) Lame (c) Blind (d) Adversity
(d) Adversity

5. Who is the speaker of the above lines?

- (a) The writer (b) Miss Beam (c) Millie (d) Anita
(b) Miss Beam

6. Give one word for a strip of woven material used to bind up a wound or to protect an injured part of the body.

- (a) Bandage (b) Woollen (c) Cloth (d) Silk
(a) Bandage

Extract 2

Directions (Q.Nos. 1-6) Read the extract given below and answer the following questions.

“Oh, yes”, she said. “Let’s go for a little walk. Only you must tell me about things. I shall be so glad when today is over. The other bad days can’t be half as bad as this. Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun, I guess. Having an arm tied up is a bit more troublesome, because you can’t eat without help and things like that. I don’t think I’ll mind being deaf for a day—at least not much. But being blind is so frightening. My head aches all the time just from worrying that I’ll get hurt. Where are we now?”

1. What was fun for the girl?

The girl’s leg was tied up and hopping about on a crutch was fun for the girl.

2. Why the girl was frightened to be blind for a day?

The girl was frightened to be blind for a day because she was afraid of being hurt.

3. What was troublesome for the girl?

Having her arm tied up was troublesome for the girl because she could not eat without it.

4. Who is the speaker of the lines?

- (a) One of the bandaged girls
- (b) Easy
- (c) The writer
- (d) Anita

(a) One of the bandaged girls

5. Give synonym for the word ‘troublesome’.

- (a) Easy (b) Polite (c) Fun (d) Bothersome
- (d) Bothersome

6. Find antonym for the word ‘fun’.

- (a) Pleasant (b) Boring (c) Grateful (d) Hungry
- (b) Boring

