

St. Andrews Scots Sr. Sec. School

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Session: 2026-27 NOTES

Class-IX Subject -English Literature. Topic- how I Taught My Grandmother to Read

Q1. Reference to Context:

A. "I could have asked somebody in this village but I was too embarrassed to do so. I felt so very much dependent and helpless. We are well off but what use is money when I cannot be independent."

1. Who is 'I' in these lines?

Ans. 'I' in these lines is the grandmother.

2. Why did she feel dependent?

Ans. She felt dependent because she was illiterate. She could not read on her own.

3. What does grandmother mean by 'I could've asked somebody' ?

Ans. The grandmother meant by 'I could've asked somebody' that she could've asked somebody to read the story 'Kashi Yatre' to her.

4. Why would she feel embarrassed ?

Ans. She feels embarrassed to reveal her inability to read and write.

5. What is 'being independent' according to her ?

Ans. To be independent, according to her, is to be self-reliant, not seeking anybody's help.

B. "We have always touched the feet of God, elders and teachers. We consider that as a mark of respect. It is a great tradition but today the reverse has happened. "

1. To which traditional Indian custom is the speaker referring to in the above extract?

Ans. The traditional Indian custom referred to is touching the feet of God, elders and teachers.

2. What does the speaker consider as a mark of respect in the context of the story?

Ans. The speaker considers touching the feet of elders as a mark of respect.

3. What is the meaning of 'reverse'? What reverse had happened on that day?

Ans. Reverse means 'change something to the opposite'. On that day, grandmother had touched the feet of her granddaughter.

4. What does the term "great tradition" refer to?

Ans. The term "great tradition" refers to the tradition of touching the feet of elders.

5. Why had this reverse happened?

Ans. The "reverse" had happened as the granddaughter had taught her grandmother to read and write.

Q 2. Answer the following questions in brief:

Q1. Describe the novel "Kashi Yatre" by Triveni. Why did the narrator identify herself with the novel?

Ans. "Kashi Yatre" narrates the tale of an elderly woman's longing for Kashi and her selfless sacrifice for a young girl's wedding. The grandmother identified with the protagonist, as she too had never been to Kashi.

Q2. Why was the grandmother in tears?

Ans. – Grandma cried due to her feelings of dependence and embarrassment about being uneducated. She lamented the societal disregard for girls' education during her time and regretted not going to school.

Q3. How had the narrator planned to surprise her grandmother? How was she herself surprised?

Ans. The narrator planned to surprise her grandmother with the novel "Kashi Yatre." However, she was surprised when her grandmother, in turn, gifted her frock material and touched her feet, expressing unexpected gratitude.

Q4. What message does the story "How I Taught My Grandmother to Read" convey?

Ans. The story emphasizes that learning knows no age limits, advocating the transformative power of education with determination. Additionally, it underscores the importance of respecting teachers, regardless of age or gender.

Answer the following questions in details:

Q1. Describe the character of grandmother.

Ans. The grandmother stands as the focal point of the entire narrative, a pivotal force around which the story revolves. A woman of sixty-two, adorned with gray hair and wrinkles, her existence is dedicated to mundane kitchen chores and the well-being of her family. Triveni, the renowned Kannada writer, emerges as the sole source of color in her otherwise routine life. The novel 'Kashi Yatre' ignites deep yearnings within her, kindling a desire for a pilgrimage to Kashi, a revered act for Hindus. The protagonist's tribulations resonate profoundly within the grandmother's heart, fostering a connection with the main character's suffering.

Beyond her religious inclinations, the grandmother devoutly worships Lord Vishweshwara and engages in rituals. She epitomizes commitment, courage, and an indomitable spirit, evident in her determination to master the Kannada alphabet at the age of sixty-two. Fiercely independent, she loathes the feeling of helplessness and desperation. Refraining from seeking assistance in the entire village, she diagnoses her weaknesses and promptly decides to learn the Kannada alphabet. Her desperation, manifested in her hand rubbing over pictures and words, poignantly expresses her intense desire for knowledge. The grandmother not only emerges as an exemplary and diligent student but also imparts wisdom through the belief that one is never too old to learn, emphasizing the revered status of a teacher regardless of age.

Q2. Explore the theme of empowerment through education as depicted in "How I Taught My Grandmother to Read."

Ans. In "How I Taught My Grandmother to Read," the theme of empowerment through education is beautifully portrayed as Sudha Murthy's grandmother undergoes a life-altering transformation. Illiteracy, initially a confining factor, gives way to the liberating power of literacy. As the grandmother learns to read, a newfound confidence and independence blossom within her. Education becomes a key catalyst for personal empowerment, breaking the shackles of societal constraints and offering a pathway to self-discovery. Sudha Murthy's narrative champions the idea that education is not only about acquiring knowledge but also about unlocking one's potential and breaking free from limitations. The story underscores the transformative and uplifting impact of education, illustrating how the pursuit of knowledge can empower individuals and elevate the human spirit.