

NCERT Book Notes
Class 10th English (First Flight)

Chapter 2 – Nelson Mandela Long Walk to Freedom

Oral Comprehension Check (pg. 18)

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

Ans: Union Building of Pretoria was the place where the ceremonies took place. The Parliament House in New Delhi, the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi, and the Madras High Court in Chennai are all notable sandstone monuments in India.

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

Ans: South Africa lies in the Southern Hemisphere. Hence, the autumn season falls in May. It was the day of South Africa's largest gathering, with many international leaders in attendance to witness the installation of the country's first non-racial democratic government.

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?

Ans: “An extraordinary human disaster” meant that the native Africans and the coloured people had to suffer a lot due to discrimination done by the British government. It was a glorious achievement, not only for the Africans but also for the people around the world. A coloured person became the President after the country was exploited for many years. In South Africa, the government ensured liberty not only to the black citizens but also to the whites.

4. What does Mandela thank the international leaders for?

Ans: While addressing everyone in his speech, Mandela thanked all the international leaders who came to witness this glorious moment. He felt privileged to gather international support for his country. It also helped him bring to light the issues that Africans faced at the hands of the British. Mandela becoming the President of Africa was not only their victory but the victory of justice, peace, and human rights across the globe.

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

Ans: Mandela wanted to work for the upliftment of everyone. He tried to address the finer details that would make Africa a progressing nation in the long run. He focused on the alleviation of poverty and suffering. He also wanted his nation to

be free from racial discrimination and a safe place for blacks, white and coloured individuals.

Oral Comprehension Check (pg. 21)

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

Ans: The military earlier arrested and disrespected the Blacks. But after Mandela became the President of South Africa, the highest military generals of South Africa saluted Mandela and pledged their loyalty towards the new emerging Africa.

2. Why were two national anthems sung?

Ans: Nelson Mandela wanted to make Africa a safe and equal country for everyone and promote universal brotherhood. So, on the day of the inauguration one national anthem was sung by whites and the other by blacks.

3. How does Mandela describe the systems of government in his country (i) in the first decade

Ans: In the first decade the racial discrimination between the blacks and white, the whites set themselves on higher pedestal and created grounds for one of the gravest racial discrimination the world had ever known. The dark skinned were treated as inferior in their own land and were denied even basic human rights.

(ii) in the final decade of the twentieth century?

Ans: In the final decade of twentieth century the racial discrimination was eradicated and was replaced by equal rights for all, irrespective of their colour.

4. What does courage mean to Mandela?

Ans: Mandela's definition of courage did not mean absence of fear but victory over fear. A man should not be fearless. He should acknowledge the fear and gather courage to fight against it.

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

Ans: It is natural for the human heart to love than to hate, according to Mandela.

Oral Comprehension Check (pg. 24)

1. What "twin obligations" does Mandela mention?

Ans: Mandela mentions that every man shoulder responsibility first towards his family, wife, children, and parents and towards his nation and community.

2. 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”?

Ans: Like any other kid for Mandela also the freedom meant the freedom to make merry and enjoy a blissful life. He was allowed everything till the time he followed the rules laid out by his father and the tribe. After growing up he realized freedom had a deeper meaning and value than he actually thought. It meant equality and honour for all. As an adult you will have to make sure there is food for the family and honour of the family is held high.

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

Ans: An oppressor, according to Mandela, is not free because he becomes a prisoner of hatred, imprisoned by prejudice and narrow-mindedness. They are stripped of their humanity, and the privilege of being human is taken away from them.

Thinking about the Text 24

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

Ans: The Britishers ruled over various countries around the world and exploited them for their own gains. Nelson Mandela became the President of South Africa, after so many years of oppression, signified their win against the oppressors. The presence of international leaders at an important event signifies their appreciation of the struggle that Africa went through. It showed that all the nations around the world were standing in unity with Africa.

2. What does Mandela mean when he says he is “simply the sum of all those African patriots” who had gone before him?

Ans: Mandela was inspired by the passion of individuals and freedom fighters, who had in their hearts a desire to free their country from the shackles of British oppression. He believed that those patriots who died before him paved this path for him and without their sacrifice, this would not have been possible. He held their sacrifice as well as the other citizens who sacrificed themselves for the nation at a pedestal. He wanted to pay his tribute for all the lives that were a part of this freedom struggle and work towards what they imagined future Africa to be.

3. Would you agree that the “depths of oppression” create “heights of character? How does Mandela illustrate this? Can you add your own examples to this argument?

Ans: Yes, I believe that “depths of oppression” create “heights of character.” It is when we face adverse situations, we realize the potential we hold. Adverse

situations help us to come out of our bubble and discover the strength that lies deep within us. Nelson Mandela never thought as a child that he would fight for the freedom of the citizens and nations. He was ready to sacrifice himself for the freedom of his nation. He served around 27 years in prison and then became the first President of independent South Africa.

4. How did Mandela’s understanding of freedom change with age and experience?

Ans: Since Mandela was a part of an African tribe, he was shouldered with responsibilities from a noticeably early age. As a young boy, Mandela was concerned about his own freedom. He considered himself to be free since he wasn't imposed with any restrictions. He was just asked to abide by his father’s and communities' rules. As he grew up and developed a better understanding of the world, he realized how selfish his view of freedom was. He understood that it's not only his freedom that matters but also other fellow black members and the residents of the country. It was after this realized he stepped into politics, to achieve this aim.

5. How did Mandela’s ‘hunger for freedom’ change his life?

Ans: Realization about the importance of the freedom of the country hit Mandela when he was young. He valued his freedom but eventually realized that if the citizens of his country aren't free then his freedom holds no importance. He held in his heart a desire for non-racial society and wanted everyone to have equal rights, irrespective of them being black or white. His own hunger for freedom soon grew into hunger for the freedom of his own people and he joined the African National Congress which acted as a stepping stone into his political career.

Thinking about Language

I There are nouns in the text (formation, government) which are formed from the corresponding verbs (form, govern) by suffixing – (at)ion or ment. There may be change in the spelling of some verb – noun pairs: such as rebel, rebellion; constitute, constitution.

1. Make a list of such pairs of nouns and verbs in the text.

Noun	Verb
Rebellion	Rebel
Constitution	Constitute

Ans:

Noun	Verb
Rebellion	Rebel
Constitution	Constitute
Government	Govern
Transformation	Transform
Deprivation	Deprive
Oppression	Oppress

2. Read the paragraph below. Fill in the blanks with the noun forms of the verbs in brackets.

Martin Luther King's _____ (contribute) to our history as an outstanding leader began when he came to the _____ (assist) of Rosa Parks, a seamstress who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger. In those days American Blacks were confined to positions of second-class citizenship by restrictive laws and customs. To break these laws would mean _____ (subjugate) and _____ (humiliate) by the police and the legal system. Beatings, _____ (imprison) and sometimes death awaited those who defied the System. Martin Luther King's tactics of protest involved non-violent _____ (resist) to racial injustice.

Ans: Martin Luther King's contribution (contribute) to our history as an outstanding leader began when he came to the assistance (assist) of Rosa Parks, a seamstress who refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger. In those days American Blacks were confined to positions of second-class citizenship by restrictive laws and customs. To break these laws would mean subjugation(subjugation) and humiliation(humiliation) by the police and the legal system. Beatings, imprisonment(imprison) and sometimes death awaited those who defied the System. Martin Luther King's tactics of protest involved non-violent resistance (resist) to racial injustice.

II. Here are some more examples of 'the' used with proper names. Try to say what these sentences mean. (You may consult a dictionary if you wish. Look at the entry for 'the')

- 1. Mr Singh regularly invites the Amitabh Bachchan's and the Shah Rukh Khans to his parties.**
- 2. Many people think that Madhuri Dixit is the Madhubala of our times.**

3. History is not only the story of the Alexanders, the Napoleons and the Hitlers, but of ordinary people as well.

Ans:

1. This means that Mr. Singh regularly invites famous personalities such as Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan to his parties.
2. This means that Madhuri Dixit is placed on a pedestal in acting just like the legendary actress, Madhubala.
3. This means that history is not only the story of the great fighters and leaders such as Alexander, Napoleon and Hitler, but also of ordinary people.

III. Match the italicised phrases in Column A with the phrase nearest meaning in Column B. (Hint: First look for the sentence in the text in which the phrase in column A occurs.)

A	B
1. I was not unmindful of the fact	(i) had not forgotten; was aware of the fact (ii) was not careful about the fact (iii) forgot or was not aware of the fact
2. when my comrades and I were pushed to our limits	(i) pushed by the guards to the wall (ii) took more than our share of beatings (iii) felt that we could not endure the suffering any longer
3. to reassure me and keep me going	(i) make me go on walking (ii) help me continue to live in hope in this very difficult situation (iii) make me remain without complaining
4. the basic and honorable freedoms of...earning my keep...	(i) earning enough money to live on (ii) keeping what I earned (iii) getting a good salary

Ans:

A	B
1. I was not unmindful of the fact	(i) had not forgotten; was aware of the
2. When my comrades and I were pushed to our limits	(iii) felt that we could not endure the suffering any longer

3. To reassure me and keep me going	(ii) help me continue to live in hope in this very difficult situation
4. The basic and honourable freedoms of...earning my keep...	(i) earning enough money to live on

Speaking

In groups, discuss the issues suggested in the box below. Then prepare a speech of about two minutes on the following topic. (First make notes for your speech in writing.)

True liberty is freedom from poverty, deprivation, and all forms of discrimination.

- **causes of poverty and means of overcoming it**
- **discrimination based on gender, religion, class, etc.**
- **constitutionally guaranteed human rights**

Ans: True liberty is freedom from poverty, deprivation, and all forms of discrimination. Liberty doesn't mean freedom from external colonial government but it also means liberty of mind and all social constrictions. Poverty is the state of being extremely poor and not being able to provide enough for yourself. One of the major reasons for the increase in the poverty rate is the rise of capitalism and the poor not being aware of their rights because of lack of education. Government should make schemes to provide free and compulsory education and vocational training to the poor.

Our society discriminates against individuals based on caste, class, gender, religion etc. Being a secular country, we should learn to live with unity and avoid these shallow issues that come between us. In togetherness lies immense strength and we should stick together to work for the betterment of our country. We as individuals need to change our subconscious regarding these aspects so that we can be more accepting of the change. The government and constitution should guarantee equal rights to everyone. Guaranteeing human rights not only makes an individual feel safe but also provides trust in his nation and government.

Writing

I. Looking at Contrasts

Nelson Mandela's writing is marked by balance: many sentences have two parts in balance.

Use the following phrases to complete the sentences given below.

(i) they can be taught to love.

(ii) I was born free.

(iii) but triumph over it.

- (iv) but he who conquers that fear.
(v) to create such heights of character.

1. It requires such depths of oppression _____

Ans: (v) to create such heights of character.

2. Courage was not the absence of fear _____

Ans: (iii) but the triumph over it.

3. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid _____

Ans: (iv) but he who conquers that fear

4. If people can learn to hate _____

Ans: (i) they can be taught to love

5. I was not born with a hunger to be free. _____

Ans: (ii) I was born free

II. This text repeatedly contrasts the past with the present or the future. We can use coordinated clauses to contrast two views, for emphasis or effect. Given below are sentences carrying one part of the contrast. Find in the text the second part of the contrast, and complete each item. Identify the words which signal the contrast. This has been done for you in the first item.

1. For decades the Union Buildings had been the seat of white supremacy, and now

Ans: It was the site of a rainbow gathering of different colours and nations.

2. Only moments before, the highest generals of the South African defence force and police ... saluted me and pledged their loyaltynot so many years before they would not have saluted _____

Ans: but arrested me.

3. Although that day neither group knew the lyrics of the anthem ..., they would soon _____

Ans: know the words by heart.

4. My country is rich in the minerals and gems that lie beneath its soil, _____

Ans: but I have always known that its greatest wealth is its people, finer and truer than the purest diamonds.

5. The Air Show was not only a display of pinpoint precision and military force, but _____

Ans: but a demonstration of the military's loyalty to democracy, to a new government that had been freely and fairly elected.

6. It was this desire for the freedom of my people ... that transformed _____ into a bold one, that drove _____ to become a criminal, that turned _____ into a man without a home.

Ans: frightened young man, a law-abiding attorney, a family-loving husband

III. Expressing Your Opinion

Do you think there is colour prejudice in our own country? Discuss this with your friend and write a paragraph of about 100 to 150 words about this. You have the option of making your paragraph a humorous one. (Read the short verse given below.)

**When you were born you were pink
When you grew up you became white
When you are in the sun you are red
When you are sick you are yellow
When you are angry you are purple
When you are shocked you are grey
And you have the cheek to call me 'coloured'.**

Ans: Yes, there is colour prejudice in my country. I belong to an Asian country where pale skin isn't that common. But I have seen a lot of people judge and stereotype people based on their colour. Pale individuals are considered better looking and more attractive than those who have darker skin tones. Society conditions the younger individuals in such a way that they should be ashamed of their skin tone if they are on the brown side of the palette. They are casually made fun of and taunted by their friends and family about it, accompanied by their advice to use skin lightening products. This reduces the self-confidence of an individual and makes them feel unacceptable and unworthy of any human affection. I believe this is a very shallow way to judge or form an opinion about someone.