

NCERT Solutions for Class 9 English Chapter 8 Reach for the Top

Thinking about the Text

I. Answer these questions in one or two sentences each. (The paragraph numbers within brackets provide clues to the answers.)

Question 1. Why was the 'holy man' who gave Santosh's mother his blessings surprised? (1)

Answer: The 'holy man' who gave Santosh's mother his blessings was surprised because Santosh's grandmother sought that Santosh's mother be blessed with a daughter. This was quite astonishing for the holy man because people mostly seek blessings for having a son.

Question 2. Give an example to show that even as a young girl Santosh was not ready to accept anything unreasonable. (2)

Answer: Even as a young girl, Santosh was not ready to accept anything unreasonable. She was not content with her place in traditional way of life and began living life on her own terms from the start. While other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh used to wear shorts.

Question 3. Why was Santosh sent to the local school? (3)

Answer: Although Santosh's parents were rich landowners and could have sent her to the best schools, Santosh was sent to the local school because of the prevailing custom in the family.

Question 4. When did she leave home for Delhi, and why? (4)

Answer: She left home for Delhi when she was sixteen because she wanted to get a proper education.

Question 5. Why did Santosh's parents agree to pay for her schooling in Delhi? What mental qualities of Santosh are brought into light by this incident? (4)

Answer: Santosh's parents agreed to pay for her schooling in Delhi when she informed them about her plans to earn money by working part time to pay for her education.

By this incident, we get to know that Santosh had a very clear goal of getting properly educated no matter what.

II. Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words)

Question 1. How did Santosh begin to climb mountains?

Answer: Kasturba Hostel where Santosh used to stay during her college days, faced Aravalli Hills. She used to watch the villagers go up the hill and vanish after a while. She decided to check out the mountains herself. She asked the villagers if she could join them to which they agreed. Then, Santosh began to climb mountains.

Question 2. What incidents during the Everest expedition show Santosh's concern for her teammates?

Answer: During Everest expedition in 1992, Santosh provided special care to a climber who was dying at the South Col. She could not save him but she managed to save another climber, Mohan Singh, by sharing her oxygen with him.

Question 3. What shows her concern for the environment?

Answer: Santosh collected and brought down 500 kilograms of garbage from the Himalayas on her way back from the 1992 Everest expedition. This shows her concern for the environment.

Question 4. How does she describe her feelings at the summit of the Everest?

Answer: She says that it took her some time for the enormity of the moment to sink in. She unfurled the Indian tricolor and held it aloft on the roof of the world.

She tells that the feeling is indescribable to watch the Indian flag flying on top of the world. She felt proud as an Indian.

Question 5. Santosh Yadav got into the record books both times she scaled Mt Everest. What were the reasons for this?

Answer: Santosh Yadav got into the record books both times she scaled Mt Everest. The first time she climbed Mt Everest, she got the record of the youngest woman in the world to achieve the feat. The second time she climbed Mt Everest, she became the only woman to climb the Everest twice.

III. Complete the following statements.

1. From her room in Kasturba Hostel, Santosh used to _____.
2. When she finished college, Santosh had to write a letter of apology to her father because _____.
3. During the Everest expedition, her seniors in the team admired her _____ while _____ endeared her to fellow climbers.

Answer:

1. From her room in Kasturba Hostel, Santosh used to watch villagers from my room, going up the hill and suddenly vanishing after a while.
2. When she finished college, Santosh had to write a letter of apology to her father because without his permission she had got herself enrolled at Uttarkashi.
3. During the Everest expedition, her seniors in the team admired her climbing skills, physical fitness, and mental strength, while her concern for others and desire to work together with them endeared her to fellow climbers.

IV. Pick out words from the text that mean the same as the following words or expressions. (Look in the paragraphs indicated.)

1. took to be true without proof (1):
2. based on reason; sensible; reasonable (2):
3. the usual way of doing things (3):
4. a strong desire arising from within (5):
5. the power to endure, without falling ill (7):

Answer:

1. took to be true without proof: assumed
2. based on reason; sensible; reasonable: rational
3. the usual way of doing things: custom

4. a strong desire arising from within: urge
5. the power to endure, without falling ill: resistance

Part II

Maria Sharapova

Thinking about the Text

Working in small groups of 4–5 students, go back over the two passages on Santosh Yadav and Maria Sharapova and complete the table given below with relevant phrases or sentences.

Points of Comparison/Contrast	Santosh Yadav	Maria Sharapova
1. Their humble beginning		
2. Their parents' approach		
3. Their will power and strong desire to succeed		
4. Evidence of their mental toughness		
5. Their patriotism		

Answer:

Points of Comparison/Contrast	Santosh Yadav	Maria Sharapova
1. Their humble beginning	She was born in the small village of Joniyawas of Rewari District in Haryana.	“My father was working as much as he could to keep my tennis-training going.”
2. Their parents' approach	But, in line with the prevailing custom in the family, Santosh had to make do with the local village school. So	“My father was working as much as he could to keep my tennis-training going.”
3. Their will power and strong desire to succeed	“And I was supposed to be in Uttarkashi on the twenty-first. So, I did not go back home; instead, I headed straight for the training.	“When you come from nothing and you have nothing, then it makes you very hungry and determined...”
4. Evidence of their mental toughness	Equipped with an iron will, physical endurance and an amazing mental toughness, she proved herself repeatedly.	“Instead of letting that depress me, I became more quietly determined and mentally tough.”

5. Their patriotism

“Then I unfurled the Indian tricolour and held it aloft on the roof of the world. The feeling is indescribable. The Indian flag was flying on top of the world. It was truly a spiritual moment. I felt proud as an Indian.”

“My blood is totally Russian. I will play the Olympics for Russia if they want me.”

Thinking about Language

Look at the following sentences. They each have two clauses, or two parts each with their own subject and verb or verb phrase. Often, one part (italicised) tells us when or why something happened.

- I reached the market *when most of the shops had closed*. (Tells us when I reached.)
- *When Rahul Dravid walked back towards the pavilion*, everyone stood up. (Tells us when everyone stood up.)
- The telephone rang *and Ganga picked it up*. (Tells us what happened next.)
- Gunjan has been with us *ever since the school began*. (Tells us for how long he has been with us.)

I. Identify the two parts in the sentences below by underlining the part that gives us the information in brackets, as shown above.

1. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts. (Contrasts her dress with that of others)
2. She left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi. (Tells us what happened after the first action.)
3. She decided to fight the system when the right moment arrived. (Tells us when she was going to fight the system.)
4. Little Maria had not yet celebrated her tenth birthday when she was packed off to train in the United States. (Tells us when Maria was sent to the U.S.)

Answer:

1. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts. (Contrasts her dress with that of others)
2. She left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi. (Tells us what happened after the first action.)
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II. Now rewrite the pairs of sentences given below as one sentence.

1. Grandfather told me about the old days. All books were printed on paper then.
2. What do you do after you finish the book? Perhaps you just throw it away.
3. He gave the little girl an apple. He took the computer apart.
4. You have nothing. That makes you very determined.

5. I never thought of quitting. I knew what I wanted.

Answer:

1. Grandfather told me about the old days when all books were printed on paper.
2. After you finish the book, perhaps you just throw it away.
3. He gave the little girl an apple and took the computer apart.
4. When you have nothing, that makes you very determined.
5. I never thought of quitting as I knew what I wanted.

Dictation

Read the passage once. Then close your books. Your teacher will dictate the story to you. Write it down with the correct punctuation and paragraphing.

The Raincoat

After four years of drought in a small town in the Northeast, the Vicar gathered everyone together for a pilgrimage to the mountain, where they would pray together and ask for the rain to return.

The priest noticed a boy in the group wearing a raincoat.

“Have you gone mad?” he asked. “It hasn’t rained in this region for five years, the heat will kill you climbing the mountain.”

“I have a cold, father. If we are going to ask God for rain, can you imagine the way back from the mountain? It’s going to be such a downpour that I need to be prepared.”

At that moment a great crash was heard in the sky and the first drops began to fall. A boy’s faith was enough to bring about a miracle that not even those most prepared truly believed in.

(translated by JAMES MULHOLLAND)

Answer: Do it yourself.

Speaking

Imagine that you are Santosh Yadav, or Maria Sharapova. You have been invited to speak at an All India Girls’ Athletic Meet, as chief guest. Prepare a short speech to motivate the girls to think and dream big and make an effort to fulfil their dreams, not allowing difficulties or defeat to discourage them. The following words and phrases may help you.

- self confident/confidence/sure of yourself
- self assured/assurance/belief in yourself
- morale/boost morale/raise morale
- giving somebody a boost/fillip/lift
- demoralising/unsure of yourself/insecure/lack confidence

Answer:

Good Morning Girls!

It is an honor to address you all from this stage. You definitely have sheer will and determination. That is what has brought you this far. As you proceed with the same passion, I want to iterate that everything you have and all that you will achieve in life will solely depend on your confidence.

Believe in yourself and your dreams. Do whatever it takes to accomplish your goals. Never ever doubt your skills. Never let the difficulties discourage you. Never lose trust on yourself just because you had to face a defeat. Whenever you fail, remember to rise and chase your passion.

Thank you.

Writing

Working in pairs, go through the table below that gives you information about the top women tennis players since 1975. Write a short article for your school magazine comparing and contrasting the players in terms of their duration at the top. Mention some qualities that you think may be responsible for their brief or long stay at the top spot.

Top-Ranked Women Players

I. The roll of honour of women who enjoyed life at the summit since everybody's favourite player, Chris Evert, took her place in 1975.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Ranked on</i>	<i>Weeks as No. 1</i>
Maria Sharapova (Russia)	22 August 2005	1
Lindsay Davenport (U.S.)	October 2004	82
Amelie Mauresmo (France)	13 September 2004	5
Justine Henin-Hardenne (Belgium)	20 October 2003	45
Kim Clijsters (Belgium)	11 August 2003	12
Serena Williams (U.S.)	8 July 2002	57
Venus Williams (U.S.)	25 February 2002	11
Jennifer Capriati (U.S.)	15 October 2001	17
Lindsay Davenport (U.S.)	12 October 1998	82
Martina Hingis (Switzerland)	31 March 1997	209
Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain)	6 February 1995	12
Monica Seles (U.S.)	11 March 1991	178
Steffi Graf (Germany)	17 August 1987	377
Tracy Austin (U.S.)	7 April 1980	22
Martina Navratilova (U.S.)	10 July 1978	331
Chris Evert (U.S.)	3 November 1975	362

Answer:

Do it yourself.

II. Which of these words would you use to describe Santosh Yadav? Find reasons in the text to support your choices, and write a couple of paragraphs describing Santosh's character.

contented, determined, resourceful, polite, adventurous, considerate, weak-willed, fearful, independent, pessimistic, patient, persevering

Answer: Santosh Yadav is determined and polite. She is adventurous as she gets fascinated by the mountaineers climbing the Everest and approaches them to ask if she could join them. She is a considerate person who helps her fellow climbers in their journey. She has determination and strong will to achieve her goals. She is a patriot and says that the feeling of watching the Indian flag on top of the world is an indescribable feeling.

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