

CBSE Class –VIII English
NCERT Solutions
Chapter - 7
English A Visit to Cambridge

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Comprehension Check

1: Which is the right sentence?

1. “Cambridge was my metaphor for England.” To the writer,

- (i) Cambridge was a reputed university in England.**
- (ii) England was famous for Cambridge.**
- (iii) Cambridge was the real England.**

Ans: (iii) Cambridge was the real England.

2. The writer phoned Stephen Hawking’s house

- (i) from the nearest phone booth.**
- (ii) from outside a phone booth.**
- (iii) from inside a phone booth.**

Ans: (ii) from outside a phone booth.

3. Every time he spoke to the scientist, the writer felt guilty because

- (i) he was not sure what he wanted to ask.**
- (ii) he forced the scientist to use his voice synthesiser.**
- (iii) he was face to face with a legend.**

Ans: (ii) he forced the scientist to use his voice synthesiser.

4. “I felt a huge relief... in the possibilities of my body.” In the given context, the highlighted words refer to

- (i) shifting in the wheelchair, turning the wrist.**
- (ii) standing up, walking.**
- (iii) speaking, writing.**

Ans: (i) shifting in the wheelchair, turning the wrist.

Working with Text

2: Answer the following Questions:

1. (i) Did the prospect of meeting Stephen Hawking make the writer nervous? If so, why?

(ii) Did he at the same time feel very excited? If so, why?

Ans: (i) Yes, the prospect of meeting Stephen Hawking make the writer nervous because Stephen Hawking was the ablest scientist, who is quadriplegic on the earth. He was the worthy author of world renowned book “A Brief History of Time”. He had become the successor to Issac Newton at the University of Cambridge. Meeting with such a great personality made the writer nervous.

(ii) Yes, he felt excited at the same time because it made him stronger to meet the disabled astrophysics who can be considered the successor of Issac Newton, for achieving something huge. This made him aware of the many possibilities present before him, thereby helping him to reach out further than he ever thought he could.

2. Guess the first question put to the scientist by the writer.

Ans: The writer might have asked the scientist if he had been brave to reach where he had.

3. Stephen Hawking said, “I’ve had no choice.” Does the writer think there was a choice? What was it?

Ans: The writer thought that there was a choice. Stephen Hawking could have chosen to leave everything, and be sad and depressed. He could have sulked. However, he chose to live creatively knowing the reality of his disintegrating body.

4. “I could feel his anguish.” What could be the anguish?

Ans: Stephen Hawking’s mind was active with many thoughts that he wanted to express. However, his thoughts came out in phrases, without reflecting his feelings or emotions. His sentences were mere lines, without any sentiment. The writer felt he could understand his anguish and frustration at that.

His anguish could be the helplessness to express so many things which lie unexpressed in his mind because of his disability. Depending on the computer to express himself that to in part is really painful.

5. What endeared the scientist to the writer so that he said he was looking at one of the most beautiful men in the world?

Ans: The writer asked Stephen Hawking if he found it annoying that someone like him came and disturbed him in his work. To this query, the scientist replied yes, frankly and honestly. Then, he smiled his one-way smile and this was what endeared him to the writer. The writer felt that he was looking at one of the most beautiful men in the world. Being disabled himself the writer knew that it is the soul which matters the most not the body, which is nothing but is accessory.

6. Read aloud the description of 'the beautiful' man. Which is the most beautiful sentence in the description?

Ans: The sentence describing the inner glow of Hawking's personality which makes his physical looks irrelevant is probably one of the most beautiful descriptions of beauty.

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7. (i) If 'the lantern' is the man, what would its 'walls' be?

(ii) What is housed within the thin walls?

(iii) What general conclusion does the writer draw from this comparison?

Ans: (i) If the lantern is man, its 'walls' is the human body.

(ii) Light of life is housed within the thin walls

(iii) The writer draws a general conclusion that inside our body is the eternal soul. Everything else is an accessory.

8. What is the scientist's message for the disabled?

Ans: The scientist Stephen Hawking's message for the disabled is that they should

concentrate on what they are good at. They should make the best use of them and thanks God. They should avoid to achieve such thing which is impossible for them.

9. Why does the writer refer to the guitar incident? Which idea does it support?

Ans: When Stephen Hawking said that things such as disabled Olympics were a waste of time, the writer agreed with him. He remembered the years which he spent trying to play a Spanish guitar that was considerably larger than he was. He was very happy when he unstrunged it one night. It supports Stephen Hawking’s idea that the disabled should only concentrate on what they are good at, and not take up things unnecessarily.

10. The writer expresses his great gratitude to Stephen Hawking. What is the gratitude for?

Ans: The writer expressed his gratitude to Stephen Hawking because he had been an inspiration for him. He saw Stephen as the embodiment of his bravest self. He felt that if he had been as brave as Stephen, he would have achieved a lot. He felt he was moving towards that embodiment that he had believed in for many years. That is why he expressed his greatest gratitude to him as he had made him realise what great heights he could reach.

11. Complete the following sentences taking their appropriate parts from both the boxes below.

- (i) There was his assistant on the line ...
- (ii) You get fed up with people asking you to be brave, ...
- (iii) There he was, ...
- (iv) You look at his eyes which can speak, ...
- (v) It doesn’t do much good to know ...

A	B
tapping at a little switch in his hand	trying to find the words on his computer
and I told him	I had come in a wheelchair from India
that there are people	on which you are too lazy to draw a cheque

as if you have a courage account	smiling with admiration to see you breathing still
and they are saying something huge and urgent	it is hard to tell what

Ans: (i) There was his assistant on the line and I told him I had come in a wheelchair from India.

(ii) You get fed up with people asking you to be brave, as if you have a courage account on which you are too lazy to draw a cheque.

(iii) There he was, tapping at a little switch in his hand trying to find words on his computer.

(iv) You look at his eyes which can speak, and they are saying something huge and urgent – it is hard to tell what.

(v) It doesn't do much good to know that there are people smiling with admiration to see you breathing still.

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Working with Language

1: Fill in the blanks in the sentences below using the appropriate forms of the words given in the following box.

(i) I met a ____ from an antique land.

(ii) I need special ____ in mathematics. I can't count the number of times I have failed in the subject.

(iii) The guide called Stephen Hawking a worthy ____ to Issac Newton.

(iv) His other problems ____ into insignificance besides this unforeseen mishap.

(v) The meeting was ____ by the youngest member of the board.

(vi) Some people say 'yours ____' when they informally refer to themselves.

(vii) I wish it had been a ____ match. We would have been spared the noise of celebrations, at least.

Ans: (i) I met a traveller from an antique land.

(ii) I need special guidance in mathematics. I can't count the number of times I have failed in the subject.

(iii) The guide called Stephen Hawking a worthy successor to Isaac Newton.

(iv) His other problems paled into insignificance besides this unforeseen mishap.

(v) The meeting was chaired by the youngest member of the board.

(vi) Some people say 'yours truly' when they informally refer to themselves.

(vii) I wish it had been a drawn match. We would have been spared the noise of celebrations, at least.

2: Make six phrases using the words given in the box.

read/session	Smile/face	Remove/chair
walk/tour	dance/doll	Win/chance

Ans: (i) Reading session

(ii) Smiling face

(iii) Revolving chair

(iv) Walking tour

(v) Dancing doll

(vi) Winning chance

3: Use all or both in the blanks. Tell your partner why you chose one or the other.

(i) He has two brothers. _____ are lawyers.

(ii) More than ten persons called. _____ of them wanted to see you.

(iii) They _____ cheered the team.

(iv) _____ her parents are teachers.

(v) How much have you got? Give me _____ of it.

Ans: (i) He has two brothers. Both are lawyers.

(ii) More than ten persons called. All of them wanted to see you.

(iii) They all cheered the team.

(iv) Both her parents are teachers.

(v) How much have you got? Give me all of it.

4: Complete each sentence using the right form of the adjective given in brackets.

(i) My friend has one of the _____ cars on the road. (fast)

(ii) This is the _____ story I have ever read. (interesting)

(iii) What you are doing now is _____ than what you did yesterday. (easy)

(iv) Ramesh and his wife are both _____. (short)

(v) He arrived _____ as usual. Even the chief guest came _____ than he did. (late, early)

Ans: (i) My friend has one of the fastest cars on the road.

(ii) This is the most interesting story I have ever read.

(iii) What you are doing now is easier than what you did yesterday.

(iv) Ramesh and his wife are both short.

(v) He arrived late as usual. Even the chief guest came earlier than he did.