

SECTION 2 - How I Taught My Grandmother to Read

I. Answer the following

1. What were the two reasons that made Triveni a popular writer?

a. Two reasons that made Triveni a popular writer were: i. Her style was easy to read and very convincing. ii. Her stories usually dealt with complex psychological problems in the lives of ordinary people and were always very interesting.

2. What is the story of *Karmaveera*? Why did grandmother identify with the story?

The story that appeared in *Karmaveera* was an episodic version of the novel *Kashi Yatre* written by Triveni. It was the story of an old lady and her ardent desire to go to Kashi to worship Lord Vishweshwara. In the story, there was also a young orphan girl who falls in love but there was no money for her wedding. In the end, the old woman gave away all her savings for the girl's wedding instead of using it to go to Kashi. The grandmother identified with the story because like the old woman in the story, she too had never been to Kashi and had a desire to do so.

3. In those days, a wedding was a great event. Why does the narrator feel so?

The narrator feels that in those days a wedding was a great event because as a child, she rarely got the chance to travel outside her village. It was a rare occasion when she could enjoy herself thoroughly with other children. They could eat and play endlessly, enjoying their freedom while all the elders were busy.

4. Why could the grandmother not pursue her education?

The grandmother could not pursue her education for various reasons. When she was a young girl, she lost her mother. There was nobody to look after and guide her. Her father was a busy man and got married again. In those days people never considered education essential for girls, so she was never sent to school. She got married very young and became very busy as she had children, and later, grandchildren. Because of these reasons, she never got a proper education.

5. Why did the grandmother feel dependent and helpless?

When the magazine arrived in the narrator's absence, the grandmother was eager to know the next part of the story. She looked at the pictures but could not understand the text. That is when she felt a sense of dependence and helplessness for not being able to read on her own.

6. Why and how did the narrator reward the grandmother?

When the grandmother started learning how to read, she had set Saraswati Pooja during Dassara as the deadline when she should be able to read a novel on her own. When Dassara arrived and the grandmother had learnt how to read, the narrator rewarded her by gifting her a copy of the novel *Kashi Yatre*.

7. How did the grandmother show her gratitude towards her granddaughter?

The grandmother showed her gratitude towards her granddaughter by touching her feet as a mark of respect due to a teacher.

8. What important message did the story of Kashi Yatre convey?

The story *Kashi Yatre* conveys the message that if one can help someone else or give them happiness in any way then it is of much more importance than prayers and worship. It also shows the value of selflessness.

9. How did the story bring out

a. an ideal relationship between a granddaughter and grandmother?

This story brings out the ideal relationship between a grandmother and a granddaughter—that of love and respect. The grandmother's love for her granddaughter and her dependence upon her can be seen clearly. The granddaughter too loves her grandmother and takes it as her duty to read to her, and later, to teach her how to read. It is apparent from their conversations and the way the grandmother confides the story of her life in her granddaughter that the two are very close.

b. the value of education?

The story brings out the value of education by depicting the otherwise independent grandmother's helplessness at not being able to read by herself—a problem that she resolves through, hard work and determination, thereby restoring her sense of pride and independence. The story depicts the empowering qualities of education.