

# My Childhood - A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

---

## Answers to NCERT Questions

### THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT

**Answer these questions in one or two sentences each.**

1. Where was Abdul Kalam's house?

**Ans:** Abdul Kalam's house was on the Mosque Street in Rameswaram.

2. What do you think Dinamani is the name of? Give a reason for your answer.

**Ans:** Kalam refers to his brother-in-law Jallaluddin who was a newspaper distributor. He used to tell him stories about the world war headlines of which Kalam says he used to search in Dinamani. Dinamani is the name of a daily newspaper in the Tamil language.

3. Who were Abdul Kalam's school friends? What did they become later?

**Ans:** Ramanadha Sastry, Aravindam and Sivaprakashan were Abdul Kalam's school friends. Ramanandha became the priest of the Rameswaram Temple, Aravindam took to transporting of pilgrims, and Sivaprakashan became a catering contractor for Southern Railway.

4. How did Abdul earn his first wages?

**Ans:** Kalam helped his brother-in-law with his paper distribution when the train's halt at Rameswaram was suspended. He had to catch the bundles as they were thrown out of the running train. This was how, he earned his first wages.

5. Had he earned money before that? In what way?

**Ans:** When he was around eight years of age, there was a sudden demand for tamarind seeds. He would collect the seeds and sell them to a provision store at Mosque Street. This was his initial attempt at earning money that fetched him about one anna.

---

### Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (30 words)

1. How does the author describe: (i) his father (ii) his mother (iii) himself?

**Ans:** Kalam says that his father Jainulabdeen, who ferried pilgrims in his boat, was not exposed to formal education, neither was he wealthy, but he possessed innate wisdom and a true generosity of spirit. His mother was good and kind-hearted, and loved feeding people. As for himself, Kalam says that he was a very short undistinguished son, born to tall and handsome parents.

2. What characteristics does he say he has inherited from his parents?

**Ans:** Kalam says that every child inherits certain qualities from their parents. He claims to have inherited honesty and self-discipline from his father, and faith in goodness and deep kindness from his mother.

---

**Discuss these questions in class with your teacher and then write down your answers in two or three paragraphs each.**

1. "On the whole the small society of Rameswaram was very rigid in terms of the segregation of different social groups, says the author.

(i) Which social groups does he mention? Were these groups easily identifiable (for example, by the way they dressed)?

(ii) Were they aware only of their differences or did they also naturally share friendships and experiences? (Think of the bedtime stories in Kalam's house; of who his friends were; and of what used to take place in the pond near his house).

(iii) The author speaks both of people who were aware of the differences among them and those who tried to bridge these differences. Can you identify such people in the text?

(iv) Narrate two incidents that show how differences can be created, and also how they can be resolved. How can people change their attitudes?

**Ans:**

(i) The two groups being mentioned are the Hindus and the Muslims. He says that as children, they never felt any difference amongst themselves, despite their religious differences because of their upbringing. They could be differentiated only on the basis of the cap he wore on his head, while his orthodox Hindu brahmin friends had the sacred thread on their chest.

(ii) They were aware of their differences but lived in harmony, helping each other in every way. Kalam speaks about the bedtime stories his mother and grandmother used to tell them, that included stories from both the Ramayana and the life of the Prophet. His father used to ferry the pilgrims, who visited Rameswaram. Most importantly, his family used to arrange boats for the Shri Sita Rama Kalyanam ceremony, to carry the idols of the Hindu Gods.

(iii) His first experience of being segregated was when his teacher objected to Kalam, a Muslim, sitting along with Hindu boys in the first row of the class. He was unceremoniously told to go to the back bench. His friend Ramanandha was very hurt with the teacher's behaviour. However, when Lakshmana Sastry, Ramanandha's father objected to his behaviour, the teacher regretted his action. The teacher was hence reformed. Secondly, his science teacher, Sivasubramania Iyer, an orthodox Brahmin, who was very fond of Kalam, was able to reform his wife who did not initially approve a Muslim boy having food in her holy kitchen.

(iv) Differences were created first, by the teacher who tried to create communal feelings among the students. And the second instance, when Sivasubramania Iyer's wife refused to serve food for a Muslim boy in her kitchen. In both the incidents, the persons who brought about a reformation of the narrow-mindedness stood their ground strongly and refused to relent. Both Lakshmana Sastry and Sivasubramania Iyer were able to change the traditional and narrow-minded approach of the teacher and the lady, respectively and make them tolerant.

## **2. (i) Why did Abdul Kalam want to leave Rameswaram?**

(ii) What did his father say to this?

(iii) What do you think his words mean? Why do you think he spoke those words?

**Ans:** Kalam wanted his father's permission to leave Rameswaram and go to the district headquarters in Ramanathapuram, to pursue his studies. His father appreciates his request and agrees that he needs to go away, if he has to grow. His father convinces his mother, by referring to the words of Khalil Gibran, in which he says that we do not have any right over anybody. Parents are only a medium to bring children to the world. They can only give them love but cannot impose their thoughts on anyone. The children have their own thoughts, and they should be allowed to follow them.

---

## **THINKING ABOUT LANGUAGE**

**Find the sentences in the text where these words occur:**

erupt, surge, trace, undistinguished, casualty

(i) a sudden demand for tamarind seeds erupted in the market

(ii) I can still feel the surge of pride

(iii) Trace in the headlines in Dinamani

(iv) a short boy with rather undistinguished looks

**1. What are the things that erupt? Use examples to explain the various meanings of erupt. Now do the same for the word surge. What things can surge?**

**Ans: Erupt**

a few things that can erupt are anger, volcano, tooth, rash, riots, unrest

(of a volcano) become active and eject lava, ash, and gases

"Mount Pinatubo began erupting in June

be ejected from an active volcano

“hot lava erupted from the crust

(of an object) explode with fire and noise

“smoke bombs erupted everywhere

2. break out suddenly and dramatically

“fierce fighting erupted between the army and guerrillas

3. give vent to anger, amusement, etc. in a sudden and noisy way

“the soldiers erupted in fits of laughter

4. (of a spot, rash, or other mark) suddenly appear on the skin

“a boil had erupted on her temple

(of the skin) suddenly develop a spot, rash or mark

“his skin erupts with hives

5. (of a tooth) break through the gums during normal development

“the lower incisors had erupted

## **Surge**

Things that can surge are pride, anxiety, waves, boats, army

a sudden powerful forward or upward movement, especially by a crowd or by a natural force such as the tide

“flooding caused by tidal surges

a sudden large increase, typically a temporary one

“the firm predicted a 20% surge in sales

a major deployment of military forces to reinforce those already in a particular area.

a powerful rush of an emotion or feeling

“Sophie felt a surge of anger

a sudden marked increase in voltage or current in an electric circuit

## **Verb**

surge; 3rd person present: surges; past tense: surged; past participle: surged; gerund or present participle: surging

1. (of a crowd or a natural force) move suddenly and powerfully forward or upward

“the journalists surged forward

increase suddenly and powerfully

“shares surged to a record high

(of an emotion or feeling) affect someone powerfully and suddenly

“indignation surged up within her

(of an electric voltage or current) increase suddenly

**2. What are the meanings of the word trace and which of the meanings is closest to the word in the text?**

**Ans: Trace**

follow, discover, ascertain the course of development, mark outline of a map/picture.

1. find or discover by investigation

“police are trying to trace a white van seen in the area

find or describe the origin or development of

“Bob’s book traces his flying career with the RAF

2. follow or mark the course or position of (something) with one’s eye, mind, or finger

“through the binoculars, I traced the path I had taken the night before

take (a particular path or route)

“a tear traced a lonely path down her cheek

3. copy (a drawing, map, or design) by drawing over its lines on a superimposed piece of transparent paper

“trace a map of the world on to a large piece of paper

draw (a pattern or line), especially with one’s finger or toe

“she traced a pattern in the dirt with the toe of her shoe.

give an outline of

“the article traces out some of the connections between education, qualifications, and the labour market

**Noun**

trace; plural noun: traces

1. a mark, object, or other indication of the existence or passing of something

“remove all traces of the old adhesive

a line or pattern displayed by an instrument to show the existence or nature of something which is being recorded or measured.

a physical change in the brain presumed to be caused by a process of learning or memory.

2. a very small quantity, especially one too small to be accurately measured

"his body contained traces of amphetamines"

a barely discernible indication of something

"just a trace of a smile"

3. a procedure to investigate the source of something, such as the place from which a telephone call was made.

"we've got a trace on the call"

---

### 3. Can you find the word undistinguished in your dictionary?

**Ans:** The word means lacking distinction; unexceptional.

---

**Answer the following questions:**

**Match the phrases in Column A with their meanings in Column B.**

**A**

- (i) broke out
- (ii) in accordance with
- (iii) a helping hand
- (iv) could not stomach
- (v) generosity of spirit
- (vi) figures of authority

**B**

- (a) an attitude of kindness, a readiness to give freely
- (b) was not able to tolerate
- (c) began suddenly in a violent way
- (d) assistance
- (e) persons with power to make decisions
- (f) according to a particular rule, principle

**Ans:**

**A**

- (i) broke out
- (ii) in accordance with
- (iii) a helping hand
- (iv) could not stomach

**B**

- (a) began suddenly in a violent way
- (b) according to a particular rule, principle, or system
- (c) assistance
- (d) was not able to tolerate

- (v) generosity of spirit      (e) an attitude of kindness, a readiness to give freely  
 (vi) figures of authority      (f) persons with a power to make decisions

**2. Study the words in italics in the sentences below. They are formed by prefixing un – or in – to their antonyms (words opposite in meaning).**

- I was a short boy with rather undistinguished looks. (un + distinguished)
- My austere father used to avoid all inessential comforts. (in + essential)
- The area was completely unaffected by the war. (un + affected)
- He should not spread the poison of social inequality and communal intolerance. (in + equality, in + tolerance)

Now, form the opposites of the words below by prefixing un- or in-. The prefix in- can also have the forms il-, ir-, or im- (for example: illiterate–il + literate, impractical–im + practical, irrational–ir + rational). You may consult a dictionary if you wish.

___adequate	___acceptable	___regular	___tolerant
___demanding	___active	___true	___permanent
___patriotic	___disputed	___accessible	___coherent
___logical	___legal	___responsible	___possible

**Ans: Prefix**

inadequate	unacceptable	irregular	intolerant
undemanding	inactive	untrue	impermanent
unpatriotic	undisputed	inaccessible	incoherent
illogical	illegal	irresponsible	impossible

**Passive Voice and Active Voice**

**Passive Voice**

**Study these sentences:**

My parents were regarded as an ideal couple.

I was asked to go and sit on the back bench.

Such problems have to be confronted.

The italicised verbs in these sentences are made up of a form of the verb be and a past participle. (For example: were + regarded, was + asked, be + confronted). These sentences focus on what happens, rather than who does what. Notice that the doer of the action is not included in the sentences. If necessary, we can mention the doer of the action in a by-phrase. For example:

- The tree was struck by lightning.
- The flag was unfurled by the Chief Guest.

A form or set of forms of a verb in which the subject undergoes the action of the verb (e.g., they were killed as opposed to the active form he killed them). The second sentence is in the passive voice.

In the passive voice, the focus is on “what happens and not on the “doer.

### **Active Voice**

A form or set of forms of a verb in which the subject is typically the person or thing performing the action and which can take a direct object (e.g., she loved him as opposed to the passive form he was loved). The first sentence is in the active voice.

In the active voice, the focus is on the “doer and not on the “action.

---

**Rewrite the sentences below, changing the verbs in brackets into the passive form.**

1. In yesterday’s competition the prizes (give away) by the Principal.

**Ans:** In yesterday’s competition the prizes were given away by the Principal.

2. In spite of financial difficulties, the labourers (pay) on time.

**Ans:** In spite of financial difficulties, the labourers were paid on time.

3. On Republic Day, vehicles (not allow) beyond this point.

**Ans:** On Republic Day, vehicles are not allowed beyond this point.

4. Second-hand books (buy and sell) on the pavement every Saturday.

**Ans:** Second-hand books are bought and sold on the pavement every Saturday.

5. Elections to the Lok Sabha (hold) every five years.

**Ans:** Elections to the Lok Sabha are held every five years.

6. Our National Anthem (composed) Rabindranath Tagore.

**Ans:** Our National Anthem was composed by Rabindranath Tagore.

---



**Rewrite the paragraphs below, using the correct form of the verb given in brackets.**

### **1. How Helmets Came To Be Used in Cricket**

Nari Contractor was the Captain and an opening batsman for India in the 1960s. The Indian cricket team went on a tour to the West Indies in 1962. In a match against Barbados in Bridgetown, Nari Contractor (seriously injure and collapse). In those days helmets (not wear). Contractor (hit) on the head by a bouncer from Charlie Griffith. Contractor's skull (fracture). The entire team (deeply concern). The West Indies players (worry). Contractor (rush ) to hospital. He (accompany) by Frank Worrell, the Captain of the West Indies Team. Blood (donate) by the West Indies players. Thanks to the timely help, Contractor (save). Nowadays helmets (routinely use) against bowlers.

### **Ans: How Helmets Came To Be Used In Cricket**

Nari Contractor was the Captain and an opening batsman for India in the 1960's. The Indian cricket team went on a tour to the West Indies in 1962. In a match against Barbados in Bridgetown, Nari Contractor was seriously injured and collapsed. In those days helmets were not worn. Contractor was hit on the head by a bouncer from Charlie Griffith. Contractor's head had fractured. The entire team was deeply concerned. The West Indies players were worried. Contractor was rushed to the hospital. He was accompanied by Frank Worrell, the Captain of the West Indies team. Blood was donated by the West Indies players. Thanks to the timely help, Contractor was saved. Nowadays helmets are routinely used against bowlers.

### **2. Oil from Seeds**

Vegetable oils (make) from seeds and fruits of many plants growing all over the world, from tiny sesame seeds to big, juicy coconuts. Oil (produce) from cotton seeds, groundnuts, soya beans and sunflower seeds. Olive oil (use) for cooking, salad dressing, etc. Olives (shake) from the trees and (gather) up, usually by hand. The olives (ground) to a thick paste which is spread onto special mats. Then the mats (layer) up on the pressing machine which will gently squeeze them to produce olive oil.

### **Ans: Oil from Seeds**

Vegetable oils are made from seeds and fruits of many plants growing all over the world, from tiny sesame seeds to big, juicy coconuts. Oil is produced from cotton seeds, groundnuts, soya beans and sunflower seeds. Olive oil is used for cooking, salad dressing, etc. Olives are shaken from the trees and gathered up, usually by hand. The olives are grounded to a thick paste which is spread onto special mats. Then the mats are layered up on the pressing machine which will gently squeeze them to produce olive oil.

---

## WRITING

3. Think and write a short account of what life in Rameswaram in the 1940's must have been like. (Were people rich or poor? Hardworking or lazy? Hopeful or change or resistant to it?).

**Ans:** In the early 1940's, the life in Rameswaram would have been very simple.

It is fairly evident from Kalam's autobiography, that the people were not very wealthy, yet they were content and lived in peace and harmony. The two major communities that lived here were the Hindus and Muslims. Some disturbances and attempts at segregation, were reported or observed, but the senior people would nip it in the bud. The Hindus and Muslims shared a cordial relationship, despite there being some rigid elements in both the communities. Religion and religious activities were the main source of distraction from the daily routine of life.

Many among the elders in the society were not educated. Kalam too had to go out of Rameswaram for his higher studies.

There was dignity of labour and people worked hard to make both ends meet.

Life became even more difficult with the outbreak of the world war and Rameswaram, being a coastal area, had to face a lot many problems. People were hopeful of a change in their lives, post the world war. They waited optimistically for India to re-establish herself as an independent nation.

---

## Additional Questions

### Extract Based Questions

**Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow: (4 Marks each)**

**1. 'I' do not recall the exact number of people she fed every day.**

- (a) Who is 'I' in the above line?
- (b) Who is 'she' and what is her name?
- (c) What is being referred to here?
- (d) Give one word to describe the character of 'she'.

**Ans:**

- (a) 'I' refers to Abdul Kalam.
- (b) 'She' is Kalam's mother and her name is Ashiamma.
- (c) Kalam is referring to the fact that his mother used to feed many outsiders every day.

(d) 'She' can be described as a 'generous' person.

**2. 'I can still feel the surge of pride in earning my own money for the first time'.**

(a) What does Kalam mean by 'surge of pride'?

(b) What is the incident being referred to here?

(c) Who was responsible in enabling Kalam earn money?

(d) What did he have to do?

**Ans:**

(a) Kalam means that he experienced a feeling of joy and satisfaction, and a sense of accomplishment when he earned money for the first time.

(b) The incident was his cousin looking out for a helping hand, and Kalam being the obvious choice.

(c) Kalam's cousin, Samsuddin was responsible in enabling him earn money.

(d) It was a state of emergency, trains did not halt at Rameswaram, so the newspapers were required to be thrown out of the running train. Kalam was chosen to be the person to catch the bundles as they were dispatched.

**3. 'The image of him weeping when I shifted to the last row left a lasting impression on me'.**

(a) Who is 'him' being referred to here?

(b) Who shifted whom?

(c) Why was he shifted?

(d) Why was he weeping?

**Ans:**

(a) 'Him' refers to Ramanadha Sastry, a brahmin boy who was Kalam's friend.

(b) The teacher shifted Kalam to the last row.

(c) Kalam was shifted because the last row was his official seat as per the social ranking of that time.

(d) Ramanadha was weeping because his close friend was insulted and was made to sit away from him.

**4. 'Once you decide to change the system, such problems have to be confronted'.**

(a) Who is saying the above line?

(b) Who is the person being spoken to?

- (c) What was the occasion?
- (d) What was the problem being referred to?

**Ans:**

- (a) Sivasubramania Iyer, the science teacher is saying the above line.
- (b) He is speaking to Kalam.
- (c) The occasion was when Kalam was invited by the teacher for lunch to his house.
- (d) Sivasubramania's wife did not approve of a Muslim boy having food in her pure kitchen.

**5. 'Does the seagull not fly across the sun, alone and without a nest?'**

- (a) Who says these words?
- (b) Why does he say them?
- (c) What do these lines mean?
- (d) What impression do you get of the speaker?

**Ans:**

- (a) These words are spoken by Kalam's father.
- (b) He says these lines to Kalam when he sought permission to leave Rameswaram to pursue his further studies.
- (c) These words mean, just as the seagull also flies away from its parents to fend for itself, everyone has to go away into the world to grow.
- (d) Kalam's father seems to be a very wise and practical person, without any personal prejudices, ego or selfishness.

---

**Short Answer Questions (30-40 words: 2 Marks each)**

- 1.** Describe the lifestyle in Kalam's home.

**Ans:** Kalam lived with his siblings and parents in a pucca house that was fairly big. His austere father did not allow unnecessary comforts and luxuries. However, all necessities like food, medicine and clothes were provided. They enjoyed a very secure childhood and his parents ensured that their children grew up to being emotionally strong individuals.

- 2.** Briefly describe the relationship between Kalam and his friends.

**Ans:** Kalam had three very close friends who belonged to the orthodox Hindu Brahmin community. They had been officially initiated after the thread ceremony. Ramanandha's

father was the high priest of the Rameswaram Temple. As children, none of them ever felt any difference amongst themselves because of religion or their upbringing. They lived in absolute harmony.

**3.** How did Lakshmana Sastry handle the new teacher?

**Ans:** Lakshmana Sastry summoned the teacher, and in the presence of Kalam and Ramanandha told the teacher not to spread the poison of social inequality and communal intolerance in the minds of children. He asked the teacher to apologise to the children or quit the school. The teacher understood his mistake and regretted his immature behaviour. The priest was successful in reforming the young teacher.

**4.** How has Kalam described his mother?

**Ans:** Kalam says that his mother was an ideal helpmate to his father. He inherited her innate qualities of faith in goodness and deep kindness. Kalam goes on to say that he could not recall the exact number of people his mother used to feed every day. She would tell Kalam and his siblings bedtime stories taking events from Ramayana and the Prophet's life, which shows how secular she was in nature. She was so subservient (submissive), that she would not question the wisdom of her husband.

**5.** What was Sivasubramania Iyer's dreams about Kalam's future?

**Ans:** Sivasubramania Iyer, though an orthodox brahmin, was a rebel, who did not believe in social and communal discriminations. He was Kalam's science teacher, and would spend hours with him. He said to Kalam one day, "I want you to develop so that you are on par with the highly educated people of the big cities. This was the dream he had of Kalam's future.

**6.** How did Sivasubramania Iyer change his wife's conservative ideas?

**Ans:** Sivasubramania's wife was a very conservative brahmin lady, who refused to have a Muslim boy having lunch in her kitchen. A calm and unperturbed Sir, did not get angry with his wife, but served Kalam with his own hands and sat beside him to eat his food. Sir invited him over again the next weekend. Kalam was in for a shock, Iyer's wife took him inside the kitchen and served him food. Iyer was able to rationalise with his wife and make her accept every human being and treat everyone with respect.

---

## **Long Answer Questions (100-150 words: 8 Marks each)**

**1.** Write a short paragraph on Kalam, the missile man.

**Ans:** Dr Kalam studied aerospace engineering at the Madras Institute of Technology after which he joined the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Dr Kalam was successful in developing the Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and SLV-III projects. In the 1970s, he also directed two projects which developed the ballistic missiles from the technology of the SLV programme.

Kalam was appointed as the Chief Executive by then Defence Minister, R. Venkataraman of a project which worked on the development of a quiver of missiles. A fund of 388 crores was allocated for this mission named Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP). He developed many missiles under this mission including Agni and Prithvi.

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam served as the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister and he served as the Chief Project Coordinator of the Pokhran-II nuclear tests. The massive media coverage this project got, made Kalam a well-known nuclear scientist.

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has received Bharat Ratna and played a major role in the testing of nuclear weapons in 1998 during the Vajpayee government. All these achievements gave him the title of 'Missile Man of India'.

**2. What is the role of Kalam's father in his life?**

**Ans:** Kalam's autobiography refers to his father as a person who had not received any formal education and was wealthy. His work involved ferrying pilgrims who visited Rameswaram in his boat. He possessed great innate wisdom, a true generosity of spirit and was very honest and disciplined. He ensured that his children were brought up with minimum comforts and maximum love and care. An austere and humble gentleman, Jainulabdeen would, along with his family, arrange boats for the Shri Sita Rama Kalyanam ceremony, which was a reflection of his secular beliefs.

Kalam's life would have been different if his father had not encouraged him to fly out of the nest. He told him that he will be able to grow only if he goes out into the world. Jainulabdeen was instrumental in convincing his wife, and making her understand that parents are only a means for children to come into the world. Parents have to raise them into good individuals and allow them to follow their own thoughts. His attitude and wisdom makes one wonder, whether a formal education is actually required to make a man a genuine human being. If this wise man had not supported his son and allowed him to pursue his passion, India would not have been blessed with such a noble soul, President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

**3. As Ramanandha, make a diary entry to express your sorrow when you were separated from your dear friend.**

**Ans:**

Thursday

14 May 1940

9.30 p.m.

Dear Diary,

Today was a very bad day of my life. I lost faith in humanity and human relationship. A new teacher had come to class. He was a very conservative Hindu. I have told you earlier also about my very dear friend Kalam. Tears are flowing out of my eyes as I write about it. Sir noticed Kalam wearing a skull cap and was annoyed that he was sitting along with me on the first bench, when he was a Muslim, who according to his social ranking should have been sitting in the last row. He shouted at him and poor Kalam got up and went back.

I was very hurt. However, I could not allow this to happen, so I complained to daddy. He will be calling the teacher and speaking to him tomorrow. I hope everything will get sorted out and we will be able to sit together again. Why do people have such weird ideas and impose it on us? It is bad to disrespect people on the basis of caste, creed and religion!

Hoping for the best!

Good night

Ramanandha

**4.** Imagine you are the new teacher who was extremely offended with the way you were treated by Sastry. Write a letter to the Headmaster of the school to register your complaint for being disrespected by the parent in front of the children. Your name is Rajesh.

**Ans:**

101, Krishna Nagar,

Rameswaram

14 May 1940

The Headmaster

Rameswaram Government School

Rameswaram

Subject: Need for parents to respect teachers.

Respected Sir,

I am Rajesh, the newly appointed teacher in this school. I am a practising Hindu, and am very particular about adhering to the principles laid down by religion and society.

In accordance with my beliefs, I took the step of sending Abdul to the last row, as that is where he is supposed to sit, according to his social ranking. I do not think I have committed a crime.

This morning, the Priest, Ramanandha's father called me and accused me of fanning communal intolerance in the children's minds. His aggressive and high-handedness was uncalled for. He told me to quit or apologise to the children, and all this in front of the two children. He was disrespectful, and I regret to say that I did not expect an interference from a parent in the school affairs.

Kindly look into the matter, or I will have to approach higher authorities for a redressal.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

Rajesh

---

## **Self- Assessment Test**

### **Extract Based Questions**

**Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow:**

**1. "Kalam, I want you to develop so that you are at par with the highly educated people of the big cities.**

- (a)** Who is the speaker of the above line?
- (b)** Which subject did the speaker teach Kalam?
- (c)** What does this tell you about the education in Kalam's native place?
- (d)** Did Kalam develop?

**2. "Not only did the teacher regret his behaviour, but the strong sense of conviction Lakshmana Sastry conveyed ultimately reformed this young teacher.**

- (a)** Who was the teacher?
  - (b)** What behaviour did he regret?
  - (c)** Who was Lakshmana Sastry?
  - (d)** How did he reform the teacher?
- 

### **Short Answer Questions**

- 1.** What would have happened, if Kalam was not allowed to leave Rameswaram?
- 2.** Briefly explain the character of Sastry.
- 3.** What values were inculcated in Kalam and his siblings by their parents?



4. Do you agree with Kahlil Gibran's words? Explain.
  5. How would you describe Sivasubramania's character?
- 

### **Long Answer Questions**

1. Give the character sketch of Kalam.
2. Which is the character in the story you liked the most? Why?
3. Kalam's father gave him the permission to go away. As Kalam, make a diary entry expressing your joy for being able to pursue your studies.