

Long Walk to Freedom

Answers to NCERT Questions

ORAL COMPREHENSION CHECK

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

Ans: The ceremonies took place in the campus of the Union Building of Pretoria.

The Parliament House, the Rashtrapati Bhawan and the Supreme Court of India in New Delhi as well as the Madras High Court in Chennai are few examples of public buildings in India that are made of sandstone.

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

Ans: 10 May is an 'autumn day' in South Africa because on this day, there was the largest gathering of international leaders on South African soil for the installation of South Africa's first democratic, non-racial 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 achievements" he speaks of at the end?

Ans: By "an extraordinary human disaster", Mandela meant to say that coloured people have suffered immensely due to discrimination at the hands of whites. He considered it as a great glorious human achievement that a black person had become the president of the country where the blacks were not considered as human beings and were treated badly.

4. What does Mandela thank the international leaders for?

Ans: Mandela felt privileged to be the host to the nations of the world because not too long ago, the South Africans were considered outlaws. He thus, thanked all the international leaders for having come to witness his venture as President, since this event could be considered as a common victory for justice, peace and human dignity.

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

Ans: Mandela sets out the ideals of poverty alleviation, and removal of suffering of people. He also sets the ideal for a society where there would be no discrimination based on gender or racial origin.

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

Ans: The highest military generals of the South African defence force and police saluted Mandela and pledged their loyalty.

Their attitude towards blacks had taken over a great change. Instead of arresting a black, they had saluted him.

7. Why were two national anthems sung?

Ans: On the day of the inauguration, two national anthems were sung, one by the whites, and the other by the blacks. This symbolised the equality of blacks and whites.

8. How does Mandela describe the systems of government in his country

(i) in the first decade, and

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

Ans: Mandela described the systems of government in his country:

(i) in the first decade of the twentieth century, the white-skinned people of South Africa patched up their differences and erected a system of racial domination against the dark-skinned people of their own land, thus creating the basis of one of the harshest and most inhuman societies the world had ever known.

(ii) in the final decade of the twentieth century, the previous systems had been overturned forever and replaced by one that recognised the rights and freedom of all people, regardless of the colour of their skins.

9. What does courage mean to Mandela?

Ans: For Mandela, courage does not mean the absence of fear but victory over fear. According to him, brave men need not be fearless but should be able to conquer fear.

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

Ans: For Mandela, love comes naturally to the human heart than hate.

11. What “twin obligations” does Mandela mention?

Ans: Mandela mentions that every man has twin obligations. The first is to his family, parents, wife and children; the second obligation is to his people, his community and his country.

12. 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 boy, freedom for Mandela meant making merry and enjoying a blissful life. He was free to run near his fields in his mother’s hut or swim in the clear stream that ran through his village. His sense of freedom was limited to his own enjoyment. As long as he obeyed his father and abided by customs of his tribe, his freedom wasn’t restricted by the laws of man or God. Gradually, he learnt that his

boyhood freedom was an illusion. Once a person becomes an adult, then antics of childhood look transitory because most of the childish activity is wasteful from an adult's perspective.

As an adult, he wanted freedom only for himself, the transitory freedom of being able to stay out at night, read what he pleased and go where he chose. Later, as a young man in Johannesburg, he yearned for the basic and honourable freedom of achieving his potential, earning his keep and of marrying and having a family. Earning honest livelihood for the daily bread gets an honourable existence in the family and in the society.

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

Ans: Mandela does not feel that the oppressor is free because according to him, an oppressor is a prisoner of hatred, who is locked behind the bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. He feels that both the oppressor and the oppressed are robbed of their humanity.

THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT

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

Ans: The presence of a large number of international leaders was a gesture of solidarity from the international community to the idea of the end of apartheid. It signified the triumph of good over evil, the triumph of the idea of a tolerant society without discrimination.

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 wants to pay his tribute to all the people who had sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom. He feels that he is the sum of all those African patriots who had gone before him because those heroes of yesterday-years had paved the path of co-operation and unity for him. Therefore, he got the support of his people to be able to come to power to bring equality for his own people.

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

Ans: I agree that “depths of oppression” creates “heights of character”. Nelson Mandela illustrates this by giving examples of great heroes of South Africa who sacrificed their lives in the long freedom struggle. India is full of such examples. During India's freedom struggle, there was a galaxy of leaders of great character. Probably the oppression of the British rule created so many men of such character. If we compare this with the

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Ans:

| Noun | Verb |
|----------------|--------------|
| rebellion | rebel |
| constitution | constitute |
| formation | form |
| government | govern |
| obligation | oblige |
| transformation | transform |
| discrimination | discriminate |
| deprivation | deprive |
| demonstration | demonstrate |
| oppression | oppress |
| imagination | imagine |

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 citizens 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 citizens by restrictive laws and

customs. To break these laws would mean subjugation (subjugate) and humiliation (humiliate) 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.

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 Bachchans and the Shah Rukh Khans to his parties.

Ans: This means that Mr Singh regularly invites famous personalities such as Amitabh Bachchans and Shah Rukh Khans to his parties.

2. Many people think that Madhuri Dixit is the Madhubala of our times.

Ans: This means that Madhuri Dixit is compared to a landmark in acting in the form of legendary actress Madhubala.

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

Ans: 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.

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

| A | B |
|--|---|
| 1. I was <i>unmindful of</i> 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 <i>were pushed to our limits</i> | (i) pushed by the guards to the wall (ii) felt that we could not endure the suffering any longer (iii) took more than our share of beatings |
| 3. to reassure me and <i>keep me going</i> | (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 |

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|---|--|
| 4. the basic and honourable freedoms of... <i>earning my keep</i> ... | (i) earning enough money to live on (ii) keeping what I earned (iii) getting a good salary |
|---|--|

Ans:

| A | B |
|--|---|
| 1. I was <i>unmindful of</i> the fact | (i) had not forgotten: was aware of the fact |
| 2. when my comrades and I <i>were pushed to our limits</i> | (ii) felt that we could not endure the suffering any longer |
| 3. to reassure me and <i>keep me going</i> | (iii) help me continue to live in hope in this very difficult situation |
| 4. the basic and honourable freedom of... <i>earning my keep</i> ... | (iv) earning enough money to live on |

WRITING

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 the 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: It requires such depths of oppression to create such heights of character.

2. Courage was not the absence of fear

Ans: Courage was not the absence of fear but the triumph over it.

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

Ans: The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid but he who conquers that fear.

4. If people can learn to hate

Ans: If people can learn to hate they can be taught to love.

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

Ans: I was not born with a hunger to be free. I was born free.

Additional Questions

Extract Based Questions

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

1. It was not only a display of pinpoint precision and military force, but a demonstration of the military's loyalty to democracy, to a new government that had been freely and fairly elected. Only moments before, the highest generals of the South African defence force and police, their chests bedecked with ribbons and medals from days gone by, saluted me and pledged their loyalty.

- a) What type of government was chosen in South Africa?
- b) How was it chosen?
- c) What do the military generals do?
- d) How has their attitude changed and why?

Ans:

- a) A democratic government was chosen in South Africa.
- b) It was chosen through free and fair elections.
- c) The military generals saluted and pledged their loyalty in front of Mr Mandela.
- d) A few years ago, military generals had arrested Mr Mandela. Their attitude had changed because the country had got freedom from the racial domination.

2. It was this desire for the freedom of my people to live their lives with dignity and self-respect that animated my life, that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one, that drove a law-abiding attorney to become a criminal, that turned a family-loving husband into a man without a home, that forced a life-loving man to live like a monk.

- a) What animated the narrator's life?
- b) Who is the law-abiding attorney here?
- c) How did 'he' become a criminal?
- d) When and what transformation took place in Mandela?

Ans:

- a) The desire for the freedom of his people's life changed his life.
- b) Nelson Mandela is the law-abiding attorney here.

- c) 'He' became a criminal according to the then prevalent laws because he was fighting for his people's freedom.
- d) It was his desire for freedom for all that transformed a frightened young man into a bold one and a law-abiding attorney into a criminal.

3. The ceremonies took place in the lovely sandstone amphitheatre formed by Union Buildings in Pretoria. For decades this had been the seat of white supremacy, and now it was the site of a rainbow gathering of different colours and nations for the installation of South Africa's first democratic, non-racial government.

- a) Which ceremonies are being referred to here?
- b) What does 'rainbow gathering' mean?
- c) Who led the first non-racial government?
- d) Where did the ceremonies take place?

Ans:

- a) Installation of the non-racial government is being referred to here.
- b) 'Rainbow gathering' means gathering of people from different nations.
- c) Nelson Mandela led the first non-racial government.
- d) The ceremonies took place in the lovely sandstone amphitheatre formed by the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

4. On that lovely autumn day, I was accompanied by my daughter Zenani. On the podium, Mr de Klerk was first sworn in as second deputy president. Then Thabo Mbeki was sworn in as first deputy president. When it was my turn, I pledged to obey and uphold the Constitution and to devote myself to the well-being of the Republic and its people.

- a) Who is the speaker of these lines?
- b) What oath did the speaker take?
- c) In which capacity did the speaker take the oath?
- d) Where did the oath taking ceremony take place?

Ans:

- a) Nelson Mandela is the speaker of these lines.
- b) The speaker took the oath to obey and uphold the Constitution and to devote himself to the well-being of the South Africans.
- c) The speaker took the oath as the President of South Africa.
- d) The oath-taking ceremony took place in the sandstone amphitheatre formed by the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

5. Never, never, and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another.

The sun shall never set on so glorious a human achievement.

- a) What was the wish for the country?
- b) What does the expression — ‘the sun shall never set here’ — imply?
- c) Which experience of oppression is referred here?
- d) What is this beautiful land the speaker refers to?

Ans:

- a) The wish for the country was that it must remain free forever and no oppressor must rule over them.
- b) The expression — ‘the sun shall never set here’ — implies that the sun of liberty shall never set and their country should enjoy freedom.
- c) The experience of the blacks being oppressed by the white people is referred here.
- d) The beautiful land being referred to is South Africa.

6. A few moments later we all lifted our eyes in awe as a spectacular array of South African jets, helicopters and troop carriers roared in perfect formation over the Union Buildings.

- a) What does the expression — ‘a spectacular array’ mean?
- b) Why did the spectators lift their eyes in awe?
- c) What was the occasion of display?
- d) Why did the inauguration ceremony take place in the amphitheatre formed by the Union Buildings?

Ans:

- a) The expression — ‘a spectacular array’ means a colourful, attractive and impressive display of aircrafts.
- b) The spectators lifted their eyes in awe because the display was difficult but perfect.
- c) The occasion of display was the inaugural ceremony of oath-taking by the newly elected non-racial South African democratic government.
- d) The inauguration ceremony took place in the amphitheatre formed by the Union Buildings because for decades, this had been the seat of white supremacy. Black people were never allowed in that area.

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

1. What unintended effect was produced by decades of oppression?

Ans: The decades of oppression made Nelson Mandela a strong person. He set out the goal to liberate the people of South Africa from continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering and other discrimination. He decided to have freedom and justice for all.

2. What pained Nelson Mandela on becoming the President of South Africa?

Ans: Nelson Mandela was sad for not able to thank those African patriots who had fought for independence and sacrificed their lives for it. This pained him that they were not able to see what their sacrifices had brought.

3. When did Mandela's hunger for self, turn into a hunger for freedom for all his people?

Ans: As Nelson Mandela turned into an adult, he gradually realised that freedom was curtailed for those people who looked like he did, but not for the whites. Consequently, he joined the African National Congress, and that was when his "hunger for freedom" became a "greater hunger".

4. Why is 10th May 1994 important for South Africa?

Ans: 10th May 1994 is important for South Africa because the first democratic non-racial government elections were held on this day in the country. And Nelson Mandela was elected and he became the first black president of the country.

5. What ideals does Mandela set out for the future of South Africa in his speech?

Ans: The ideals that Mandela set out for the future of South Africa in his speech was to liberate the people of South Africa from continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discriminations.

6. What did Nelson Mandela pledge when he was sworn in as President?

Ans: Nelson Mandela pledged to uphold the Constitution of his country and devote himself to liberate his people from the bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discriminations. There would be freedom and justice for all.

7. What did Nelson Mandela remember on the day of inaugural ceremony?

Ans: Nelson Mandela remembered the history — the birth of Apartheid, its effect on his people and the long fight for freedom. He remembered the freedom fighters who suffered and sacrificed for the freedom. He also remembered what freedom meant to him at different stages of life and his hunger for freedom.

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

1. Nelson Mandela in his inaugural speech used these two words 'an extraordinary human disaster' and 'glorious human achievement'. What did he mean by that?

Ans: The extraordinary disaster was the rule of Apartheid in South Africa. This disaster of racial discrimination brought with it oppression, deprivation, cruelty and suffering for

the black people of South Africa. Blacks were not allowed to visit the places reserved for the whites. They led a life of humiliation.

At last, on 10 May 1994, after more than three centuries of white rule, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress Party won the elections. Nelson Mandela became the first black President of South Africa. The coming into power of non-racial government was a glorious human achievement.

2. What were the difficulties faced by Nelson Mandela in achieving freedom for his people?

Ans: In his endeavour to get freedom for his countrymen from the rule of Apartheid, Nelson Mandela had to undergo many hardships and suffered a lot. This great patriot had to sacrifice the comfort of his home and loving family. He was declared an outlaw for demanding equality for all his fellow black Africans. He was punished, isolated and put into jail. He and his comrades were oppressed and tortured beyond tolerance. He suffered hunger, oppression and injustice, but kept the flame of independence burning in his heart. His undaunted courage, persistent struggle and unparalleled sacrifice, bore fruit and South Africa got freedom from the rule of Apartheid on 10 May 1994.

3. Give the character sketch of Nelson Mandela.

Ans: Nelson Mandela was a great patriot. He loved his country and countrymen. For him, the greatest wealth of South Africa was his people. He had a sacrificing nature. He sacrificed his life of comfort, family and home, and plunged into the struggle for freedom. He believed in equality for all. He opposed the rule of Apartheid for which he was declared an outlaw. He was oppressed and tortured in jail for several years, but he never broke. It showed traits of tolerance, courage and perseverance.

4. What different concepts of freedom did Mandela have at different stages of his life?

Or

How did Mandela's understanding of freedom change with age and experience?

Ans: Mandela had different concepts of freedom at different stages of life. As a boy, he had an illusion about freedom. He thought he was born free. As long as he obeyed his elders, he had the freedom to run in the fields, swim in the stream and ride on the back of bulls.

As a student, he cared for transitory freedom — freedom to stay out at night, read the books of his choice and go wherever he liked.

When he became a young man, he yearned for basic and honourable freedom of achieving his potential, earning his keep, marrying, having a family and living a lawful life.

Slowly his concept of freedom widened especially when he joined the African National Congress. He realised that true freedom is not an individual freedom but freedom for all.

5. What does Mandela say about the policy of Apartheid?

Or

Write down Mandela's views about the policy of Apartheid.

Ans: Mandela says that the policy of Apartheid created a deep and lasting wound in his country and his people. It was such a deep wound that all of them would take many years, if not generations to recover from. The people of South Africa had to suffer decades of oppression and brutality. This had another unintended effect. It produced men of extraordinary courage, wisdom and generosity among the blacks. The deeper the oppression, the stronger becomes the character that suffers it. Mandela says his country is rich in the minerals and gems that lie beneath its soil, but its greatest wealth is its people who are finer and truer than the purest diamonds. The policy of Apartheid practiced by the whites brought to light these purest diamonds among the blacks of South Africa.

Self- Assessment Test

Extract Based Questions

Read the following extracts carefully and answer the questions that follow.

1. I felt that day, as I have on so many other days, that I was simply the sum of all those African patriots who had gone before me. That long and noble line ended and now began again with me.

- a) Who is speaking the above lines?
- b) What was the speaker feeling that day?
- c) Explain, 'sum of all'.
- d) What happened to the long and noble line?

2. The structure they created formed the basis of one of the harshest, most inhumane societies, the world has ever known. Now, in the last decade of the twentieth century, and my own eighth decade as a man, that system had been overturned forever and replaced by one that recognised the rights and freedoms of all people, regardless of the colour of their skin.

- a) Who are 'they' in the above lines?
 - b) What is the 'system' mentioned here?
 - c) What formed the structure 'they' created?
 - d) What has happened in the last decade?
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Short Answer Questions

1. What does Mandela thank the international leaders for?
 2. What does courage mean to Mandela?
 3. Whom does Mandela call comrades? Why?
 4. What is the importance of 10 May 1994?
 5. Why were two national anthems sung?
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Long Answer Questions

1. Why did Nelson Mandela join African National Congress? Explain in detail.
2. Briefly explain Nelson Mandela's contribution for the emancipation of South African people.
3. What were the major effects of the policy of Apartheid?