

NCERT Class 10 English Chapter 1 – A Letter to God

A Letter to God

Question 1:

What did Lencho hope for?

Answer:

Lencho had hoped for a downpour or at least a shower for his ripe corn fields as it was needed for a good harvest.

Question 2:

Why did Lencho say the raindrops were like ‘new coins’?

Answer:

Lencho compared the raindrops to ‘new coins’, the big drops as ten cent pieces and the little ones as fives. As his crops were ready for harvest, he hoped that the rains would bring him prosperity so he felt the raindrops were like ‘new coins’.

Question 3:

How did the rain change? What happened to Lencho’s fields?

Answer:

The rain started pouring down. But suddenly a strong wind blew and very large hailstones, like frozen pearls, began to fall along with the rain. The hailstorm continued for an hour and destroyed Lencho’s corn fields and washed away the flowers from the plants too.

Question 4:

What were Lencho’s feelings when the hail stopped?

Answer:

After the hailstones stopped, Lencho’s soul was filled with grief and dismay. He realised that everything was ruined by the hailstorm and nothing was left to feed his family for the entire year. He could visualize the bleak future of his family.

Who or what did Lencho have faith in? What did he do?

Answer:

Lencho had firm faith in God. He believed ' that God sees everything, even what is deep in one's conscience and help everyone in one's problems. He wrote a letter to God demanding him a hundred pesos to sow his field again.

Question 6.

Who read the letter?

Answer:

Postmaster read the letter.

Question 7.

What did the postmaster do after reading a letter?

Answer:

The postmaster laughed when he read Lencho's letter but soon he became serious and was moved by the writer's faith in God. He didn't want to shake Lencho's faith. So, he decided to collect ,money and send it to Lencho on behalf of God.

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Question 8.

Was Lencho surprised to find a letter for him with money in it?

Answer:

Lencho was not surprised to find a letter with money from God as he believed that God will help him.

Question 9.

What made Lencho angry?

Answer:

There were only seventy pesos in the envelope whereas Lencho had demanded a hundred pesos. The difference in the amount made him angry.

Thinking about the Text (Page 7,8)

10. Who does Lencho have complete faith in? Which sentences in the story tell you this?

Ans: Lencho had blind faith and trust in God, and he knew he would address and find a solution to all his problems. The following sentences from the story tells us about the same:

- a. But in the hearts of all who lived in that solitary house in the middle of the valley, there was a single hope: help from God.
- b. All through the night, Lencho thought only of his one hope: the help of God, whose eyes, as he had been instructed, see everything, even what is deep in one's conscience.
- c. "God," he wrote, "if you don't help me, my family and I will go hungry this year."
- d. God could not have made a mistake, nor could he have denied Lencho what he had requested.
- e. He wrote 'To God' on the envelope, put the letter inside and, still troubled, went to town.
- f. It said: "God: of the money that I asked for, only seventy pesos reached me. Send me the rest since I need it very much."

11. Why does the postmaster send money to Lencho? Why does he sign the letter 'God'?

Ans: Humans always had faith in God, and they rely on him for their problems. But Lencho's faith was beyond anyone else's. He wrote a letter to God and demanded money from him as if asking a friend for financial assistance. Since the postmaster was touched by Lencho's letter to God, he wanted Lencho to maintain the faith he had in the almighty, hence, he sent him seventy pesos and signed the letter as God.

12. Did Lencho try to find out who had sent the money to him? Why/Why not?

Ans: No, Lencho had trust and faith in God. When he received the letter, he was so sure that it was sent by God that he did not even bother to find out who actually sent the amount to him. He was so sure about it that he even went to the post office to fight with the postmaster about the amount being less than a hundred pesos because he knew God will not leave his wish partially unfulfilled.

13. Who does Lencho think has taken the rest of the money? What is the irony in the situation? (Remember that the irony of a situation is an unexpected aspect of it. An ironic situation is strange or amusing because it is the opposite of what is expected.)

Ans: Lencho blames the postmaster for stealing money from his envelope that was sent by God since he received thirty pesos less than asked. The irony of the situation was that it was not God who actually sent him the amount but the postmaster himself, whom he was accusing of the crime.

14. Are there people like Lencho in the real world? What kind of a person would you say he is? You may select appropriate words from the box to answer the question.

Greedy Naive Stupid Ungrateful Selfish Comical Unquestioning

Ans: Humans as a civilization have always worshiped or looked upon a greater power for assistance during challenging times but Lencho's faith was beyond comprehension. I do not think people like him exist in the world who would actually write a letter to God and demand him for money. He was very naive and unquestioning in his reasoning by displaying such blind faith in God.

6. There are two kinds of conflict in the story: between humans and nature, and between humans themselves. How are these conflicts illustrated?

Solution : The conflict between humans and nature is shown by the destruction of Lencho's crops by the hailstorm. As the crops failed by hail, Lencho started feeling sad and gloomy after the storm appropriately projects the conflict of the nature and the man. The Story also shown another conflict, between humans themselves. The postmaster, along with the help of the other post office employees, sent Lencho the money that they could manage to collect. They were not related to Lencho in any manner. It was an act of kindness and selflessness on their part. Even though they did a good deed, Lencho blamed them for taking away some amount of money. This shows that man does not have faith in his fellow humans, thereby giving rise to this conflict.

Thinking about the Language

1. There are different names in different parts of the world for storms, depending on their nature. Can you match the names in the box with their descriptions below, and fill in the blanks? You may use a dictionary to help you.

gale,	whirlwind,	cyclone,
hurricane,	tornado,	typhoon

1. A violent tropical storm in which strong winds move in a circle: ___ c ___

2. An extremely strong wind: ___ a ___
3. A violent tropical storm with very strong winds: ___ p ___
4. A violent storm whose centre is a cloud in the shape of a funnel: ___ n ___

5. A violent storm with very strong winds, especially in the western Atlantic ocean: ___ r ___
6. A very strong wind that moves very fast in a spinning movement and causes a lot of damage: ___ l ___

Solution :

1. Cyclone
2. Gale
3. Typhoon
4. Tornado
5. Hurricane
6. Whirlwind

2. Match the sentences in Column A with the meanings of 'hope' in Column B.

A	B
1. Will you get the subjects you want to study in college? I hope so.	— a feeling that something good will probably happen
2. I hope you don't mind my saying this, but I don't like the way you are arguing.	— thinking that this would happen (It may or may not have happened).

3.	This discovery will give new hope to HIV/AIDS sufferers.	– stopped believing that this good thing would happen
4.	We were hoping against hope that the judges would not notice our mistakes.	– wanting something to happen (and thinking it quite possible)
5.	I called early in the hope of speaking to her before she went to school.	– showing concern that what you say should not offend or disturb the other person: a way of being polite
6.	Just when everybody had given up hope, the fishermen came back, seven days after the cyclone.	– wishing for something to happen, although this is very unlikely

Solution :

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1. Will you get the subjects you want to study in college? I hope so.	– wanting something to happen (and thinking it quite possible)
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5. I called early in the hope of speaking to her before she went to school.	– thinking that this would happen (It may or may not have happened.)
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3. Join the sentences given below using **who, whom, whose, which** as suggested.

1. I often go to Mumbai. Mumbai is the commercial capital of India. (which)
2. My mother is going to host a TV show on cooking. She cooks very well. (who)
3. These sports persons are going to meet the President. Their performance has been excellent. (whose)

4. Lencho prayed to God. His eyes see into our minds. (whose)
5. This man cheated me. I trusted him. (whom)

Solution :

1. I often go to Mumbai, which is the commercial capital of India.
2. My mother, who cooks very well, is going to host a TV show on cooking.
3. These sportspersons, whose performance has been excellent, are going to meet the President.
4. Lencho prayed to God, whose eyes see into our minds.
5. This man, whom I trusted, cheated me.

4. Find sentences in the story with negative words, which express the following ideas emphatically.

(i.) The trees lost all their leaves.

Solution : The trees lost all their leaves.
Not a leaf remained on the trees.

(ii.) The letter was addressed to God himself.

Solution : The letter was addressed to God himself. It was nothing less than a letter to God.

(iii.) The postman saw this address for the first time in his career.

Solution : The postman saw this address for the first time in his career. Never in his career as a postman had he known that address.

. In pairs, find metaphors from the story to complete the table below. Try to say what qualities are being compared. One has been done for you.

Object	Metaphor	Quality or Feature Compared
Cloud	Huge mountains of clouds	The mass or 'hugeness' of mountains.
Raindrops		
Hailstones		
Locusts		

		An epidemic (a disease) that spreads very rapidly and leaves many people dead.
	An ox of a man.	

Solution :

Object	Metaphor	Quality or Feature Compared
Cloud	Huge mountains of clouds	The mass or 'hugeness' of mountains
Raindrops	A curtain of rain	The draping or covering of an area by a curtain
Hailstones	The frozen pearls	The resemblance in colour and hardness of a pearl
Locusts	A plague of locusts	The consequences (destruction) of plague
Locusts	A plague of locusts	An epidemic (a disease) that spreads very rapidly and leaves many people dead
Man	An ox of a man	The working of an ox in the fields (hard work)

