

Short-Answer Questions

Q.1. What are the ways by which Mr Lamb tries to overcome the feelings of loneliness and disappointment?

OR

How does Mr Lamb keep himself busy when it is a bit cool?

[CBSE Delhi 2012]

Ans. Mr Lamb collects crab apples and makes jelly out of them, when it is cooler. He leaves his gates open to welcome whoever wishes to come into the garden.

Q.2. Why does Derry tell Mr Lamb that he is afraid of seeing himself in the mirror in the story 'On the Face of it'?

[CBSE (AI) 2007]

Ans. Derry's face had become scarred due to acid burns. This terrified him and brought in bad memories of the incident. In order to avoid them, he avoided seeing himself in the mirror.

Q.3. Mr Lamb's advice to Derry was the product of his goodness of heart or to befriend him to overcome his loneliness. Give reason.

Ans. Mr Lamb genuinely liked Derry and wanted him to overcome his inhibitions towards life. He did not want the boy to suffer and have a poor self-esteem because he had a burnt face. He gave his example only for him to understand what can be done to overcome loneliness and to make him understand that a disability should not stop one from enjoying life.

Q.4. People are insensitive to those who have disabilities. Give instances from the story, 'On the face of it'.

Ans. People generally pity the handicapped or react with disgust when they see them. For instance, people would stare at the burnt face of Derry and comment on it. He even heard two women commenting, looking at his face that only a mother could love a person with such a face. Even his own family were worried about his future. Similarly, Mr Lamb was also stared at by people and children even called him Lamey Lamb.

Q.5. How does Mr Lamb try to remove the baseless fears of Derry?

[CBSE (AI) 2008]

Ans. Mr Lamb gave confidence and courage to Derry. He suggested that Derry should get over his physical impairment instead of brooding over his burnt face. He told Derry

that he still has two hands, legs, eyes, a tongue and a brain, and if he puts them to right use by setting his mind to it, he can get on better than all the rest.

Q.6. What did Derry's mother think of Mr Lamb?

[CBSE (AI) 2009]

Ans. Derry's mother did not have a good impression of Mr Lamb. She thought he was not a good man. She did not want Derry to associate with him in any way.

Q.7. What consolation did people give when they saw his acid burnt face?

[CBSE Delhi 2010]

Ans. Derry's face was burnt by acid on one side. When people looked at his face, they drew back in horror. They pretended to show sympathy as if he was an object.

Q.8. Mr Lamb told Derry the story of a man who hid himself in his room. Why did the man do so and with what result?

[CBSE (AI) 2010]

Ans. The man was afraid of everything. He felt that he would die if he went out and so he hid himself in a room. In the end, a picture fell off the wall on his head and killed him.

Q.9. Why does Mr Lamb leave his gate always open?

[CBSE (AI) 2011]

Ans. Mr Lamb leaves his gate always open to welcome children. He did not have his own children. He has an apple orchard. He offered them apples and its jelly.

Q.10. What peculiar things does Derry notice about the old man, Lamb?

[CBSE (AI) 2012]

Ans. Unlike the other people who were horrified on looking at Derry, Mr Lamb did not show any dislike or horror at the way Derry looked. This surprised him. He also found it strange that even though the man himself was handicapped, he lived happily. He had a zest for life and encouraged him in ways no one had. He made him aware of his strengths and the importance of not pitying oneself.

Q.11. If you were to give a different ending to the story 'On the Face of It', how would you end it?

[CBSE (AI) 2013]

Ans. The story could end on a happy note. In another ending, Derry sees Mr Lamb on the ground, rushes to him and sees that he is hurt. He rushes for help and is finally able to get some help in order to revive the old man. Mr Lamb is happy to see that Derry had overcome his inhibitions and rushed to bring help for him. In the next spring season, not

only Derry and Mr Lamb but other children are also seen in Mr Lamb's garden, happy and collecting crab apples together.

Q.12. How does Derry interpret the fairy tale 'Beauty and the Beast'? What does he feel about himself?

[CBSE (F) 2013]

Ans. Derry knows that the theme of the fairy tale is to love inner beauty of a person, irrespective of the outside appearances. However, Derry thinks it to be all a farce. He finds the whole idea of transformation into a prince unrealistic. He is very pessimistic and fears that he would have to live alone for the rest of his life. In his fight with the world, he has forgotten to appreciate and love himself. He has forgotten that appearances are secondary.

Long-Answer Questions

Q.1. Do you think Mr Lamb leaves Derry with a positive frame of mind in the end? Mr Lamb dies but leaves his spirit behind.

OR

Describe how Mr Lamb and Derry's conversation bring about a change in the views of Derry, towards life.

OR

What benefits did Derry reap from his associations with Mr Lamb?

[CBSE Delhi 2014]

Ans. The interaction between Derry and Mr Lamb had been short but the impact on Derry was very powerful. Mr Lamb tried to show Derry that life is much more than his obsession with his disability. It is good to know one's limitations but limiting oneself because of the limitations is wrong. To prove his point, Mr Lamb gave example of other people's lives and also his own. He wanted to show that disability is not in the body but in the mind and the moment it engulfs the mind, one loses out on oneself.

Mr Lamb does not ask Derry the reason behind his disfigured face, something which everyone else had done. Mr Lamb's apparent disregard for his own disability also amazes him. For someone who was fixated with his own disability and who had in fact started pitying himself, it was a shock. Mr Lamb, without overtly advising him, through his actions and behaviour, his benevolent nature and through his optimistic attitude towards life, made Derry realise that there is more to life than being forever concerned with oneself. The old man instilled a new hope in Derry to live life on his own terms.

Q.2. How did Mr Lamb's meeting with Derry become a turning point in Derry's life?

[CBSE Delhi 2008; CBSE (AI) 2011]

OR

Derry sneaked into Mr. Lamb's garden and it became a turning point in his life. Comment.

[CBSE Delhi 2016]

Ans. Mr Lamb turned Derry into a confident boy from a self-pitying one. Both were physically handicapped but had a different outlook towards life. Derry had a pessimistic attitude and felt that life cannot be lived happily with a handicap. Derry was a defiant

and withdrawn boy who hated socialising. He felt frustrated with people, their staring and their jibes at him. Meeting Mr Lamb had a positive effect on Derry. Mr Lamb, though handicapped, had a very optimistic outlook towards life. He felt that life can be lived happily irrespective of whatever one's handicap was.

Derry could be himself in front of Mr Lamb and Mr Lamb never pitied him. Mr Lamb did not have a leg and even then he was happy with his life. He taught Derry to take life the way God had given and live to the full rather than just being forlorn and complain throughout.

Derry made his mother understand that his handicap was something immaterial and would not affect his happiness or hamper his progress in life. Meeting Mr Lamb had in fact led him to turn a new leaf in his life.

Q.3. Both Derry and Lamb are physically impaired and lonely. It is the responsibility of society to understand and support people with infirmities so that they do not suffer from a sense of alienation. As a responsible citizen, write in about 100 words what you would do to bring about a change in the lives of such people.

[CBSE (AI) 2014]

OR

How is Derry's and Mr. Lamb's behavior and attitude different towards people because of their physical impairment?

[CBSE Sample Paper 2015]

Ans. Derry's main problem was his burnt face. One side of his face was eaten up by acid. He suffered from a tremendous sense of inferiority complex. He was always conscious that his face was "bad", "terrible" and "the ugliest thing". People were "afraid" of him. He tries to escape people. He allows himself to be alienated from the world. On the other hand, Mr Lamb doesn't allow his physical disability to come in his way. He accepts life as it comes. He has a positive attitude towards life, things and people. He doesn't find solace in escapism. Children tease him by calling "Lamey-Lamb" but he doesn't mind it. One of his legs was blown off in the war. But he is full of life and enjoys it at his best. He enjoys sitting in the sun, reading books and growing weeds and flowers.

Derry is withdrawn and defiant. He doesn't trust people. He thinks that no one will ever love and kiss him except his own mother. He can't stand people staring at him or passing uncharitable remarks. He is touchy and hypersensitive. Mr Lamb is openminded and open-hearted. All were welcome in his house. He loves everybody and everything. He teaches Derry how to handle people and things.

Q.4. Sophie's dream world clashes with the world of her family and friends". Bring out the stark difference between the two worlds.

[CBSE Sample Paper 2015]

Ans. Both Derry and Mr. Lamb were physically impaired and had faced rejection from others. Both suffer from loneliness and long for company. Mr. Lamb who was like Derry had inspired him to face the world inspite of his physical impairment. Instead of brooding over his burnt face, he asks him to regard himself lucky that he did not have any other problems. If he set a goal to do something, his burnt face would not stand in his face and he could do even better than others. So Mr. Lamb infused a new spirit and zest of life in Derry who now would lead a new life after meeting him. This was evident from the fact that he went back to Mr. Lamb's garden despite stiff resistance from his mother.

Q.5. The lesson, 'On the face of it', is an apt depiction of the loneliness and sense of alienation experienced by people on account of a disability. Explain.

[CBSE Delhi 2011]

OR

Both Derry and Lamb are victims of physical impairment, but much more painful for them is the feeling of loneliness. Comment.

[CBSE (AI) 2016]

Ans. Man is vain, selfish and prejudiced. He does not cherish anything that is incomplete or impaired. This nature of man, creates a vacuum in the life of human beings who are handicapped, for no fault of theirs. A war veteran, an accident victim, a polio affected, or a person born handicapped is looked upon by the so called 'Normal' people with a false sense of sympathy, disgust or repulsion. As a result the injury that is physical becomes secondary to the injury that is caused to the mind, and psyche of the person. They become pessimistic, feel lonely and alienated they are rejected by the society.