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MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ – TEST) 1. William Douglas was a friend and adviser of (a) President Kennedy (b) President Cleveland (c) President Roosevelt (d) President Clinton 2. In the essay William Douglas talks about his fear of (a) fire (b) lizards (c) snake (d) water 3. The writer decided to learn to swim when he was about (a) ten or eleven years old (b) fifteen or sixteen years old (c) twenty years old (d) eighteen years old 4. He decided to learn swimming in the pool at (a) the local club (b) his school (c) Y.M.C.A (d) Country Club 5. His mother warned him against swimming in the Yakima River because it had (a) strong currents (b) it was meant only for boating (c) many people had drowned there (d) it had no lifeguards around 6. At the shallow end, the Y.M.C.A pool was (a) 1 foot deep (b) four feet deep (c) two or three feet deep (d) five feet deep 7. The pool’s depth at the deep end was (a) twenty feet (b) nine feet (c) six feet (d) eight feet 8. The author hated to walk naked to the pool as he had (a) skinny arms (b) bony chest (c) skinny legs (d) hairy legs 9. The incident in childhood had taken place at the beach in (a) Florida (b) Washington (c) New York (d) California 10. The introduction to the Y.M.C.A swimming pool revived for Douglas (a) childhood fear of water (b) memories of a holiday at the beach (c) memories of father and son companionship (d) a terrible accident 11. The misadventure at the Y.M.C.A pool happened when (a) Douglas was accompanied by friends (b) he was with his father (c) he was alone (d) he was with his mother 12. The boy who threw Douglas into the pool was about (a) twenty years old (b) eighteen years old (c) twenty-one years old (d) fifteen years old 13. Douglas calls him a (a) nasty human being (b) a brute (c) a beautiful physical specimen (d) a big bully 14. He tossed Douglas into the pool towards its (a) shallow end (b) middle (c) edge (d) deep end 15. Though Douglas was frightened, he was not (a) afraid to die (b) going to survive (c) out of his wits (d) able to shout for help 16. When his feet would hit the bottom Douglas planned to (a) make a big jump (b) lie down (c) start his strokes (d) float 17. The nine feet seemed to Douglas like (a) hundred feet (b) ninety feet (c) fifty feet (d) twenty-five feet 18. Douglas imagined that on hitting the bottom, he would (a) bob to the surface like a cork (b) would come up to Tab his water wings (c) would lie flat and float up (d) shout for help 19. When Douglas tried to yell (a) everyone came to his rescue (b) no sound came out (c) his father arrived (d) the lifeguard dived to save him up, they hung as 20. As Douglas tried to bring his legs (a) dead branches (b) dead weights (c) dead sticks (d) dead bodies 21. The water in the pool had a (a) dirty yellow tinge (b) a blue reflection (c) green colour (d) no colour 22. Douglas was seized by (a) the lifeguard (b) stark terror (c) his friend (d) the boy who had thrown him 23. Douglas went down towards the bottom (a) only once (b) twice (c) three (d) five times 24. After the third unsuccessful attempt to spring up, Douglas thought that he was (a) floating in space (b) floating in the River Yakima (c) floating in the air (d) floating in a rubber tube 25. When he regained consciousness, he (a) laughed at his experience (b) had 104° F fever (c) shook and cried and didn’t eat anything (d) told his mother about his misadventure 26. Every time Douglas attempted to go inside water, his legs would (a) be shaky (b) make him run (c) help him keep afloat (d) be paralyzed 27. After being haunted by fear for many years Douglas decided to learn to swim. He took the help of (a) his mother (b) his father (c) a friend (d) an instructor 28. A rope was attached to (a) Douglas’ legs (b) Douglas’ arms (c) Douglas’ belt (d) Douglas’ swimming trunks 29. He practised in the pool (a) ten times a week (b) five days a week (c) twice a week (d) thrice a week 30. Douglas’ tension started slackening after (a) four months (b) three months (c) five months (d) one month 31. Douglas had to repeat exhaling and inhaling exercises (a) hundred times (b) forty times (c) fifty times (d) ten times 32. ‘Now you can swim’. These words were spoken by (a) Douglas’ father (b) teacher in school (c) uncle (d) instructor 33. Whenever terror struck again, Douglas would start (a) shouting (b) laughing (c) crying (d) talking to terror 34. Douglas swam the lake to Stamp Act Island covering a distance of (a) five miles (b) seven miles (c) two miles (d) one mile 35. ‘What do you think you can do to me?’ These words were spoken by Douglas to (a) a shark (b) to his enemy (c) to the boy who pushed him (d) to terror 36. After swimming across to the other shore of Warm Lake, Douglas shouted with joy and his voice was returned as an echo by (a) Gilbert peak (b) Everest peak (c) Alps (d) Blue Mountain 37. ‘All we have to fear is fear itself. Who said these words? (a) Douglas (b) his instructor (c) his father (d) President Roosevelt 38. With his hard work, Douglas had (a) conquered his fear of water (b) conquered Mount Everest (c) got a good job (d) got a promotion 39. At the end of the experience, Douglas felt (a) happy (b) released (c) sad (d) victorious 40. His fear of water (a) ruined his trips (b) made him extremely guilty (c) was not liked by friends (d) made him weak ANSWERS 1.(c) President Roosevelt 2. (d) water 3.(a) ten or eleven years old 4. (c) Y.M.C.A 5.(c) many people had drowned there 6. (c) two or three feet deep 7. (b) nine feet 8. (c) skinny legs 9. (d) California 10. (a) childhood fear of water 11.(c) he was alone 12. (b) eighteen years old 13.(c) a beautiful physical specimen 14. (d) deep end 15. (c) out of his wits 16. (a) make a big jump 17.(b) ninety feet 18. (a) bob to the surface like a cork 19.(b) no sound came out 20. (b) dead weights 21.(a) dirty yellow tinge 22. (b) stark, terror 23.(c) thrice 24. (a) was floating in space 25.(c) shook and cried and didn’t eat anything 26. (d) be paralyzed 27.(d) an instructor 28.(c) Douglas’ belt 29.(b) five days a week 30. (b) three months 31.(a) hundred times 32.(d) instructor 33.(d) talking to terror 34. (c) two miles 35.(d) to terror 36. (a) Gilbert peak 37.(d) President Roosevelt 38. (a) conquered his fear of water 39.(h) released 40. (a) ruined his trips Short Answer Type Questions (30 to 40 words) SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS Q1. Douglas had a fear of water even before his experience of drowning in the Y.M.C.A pool? Why? Ans. At the age of three or four, Douglas had gone with his father to the beach. A powerful wave had struck him and knocked him down while he was with his father in the surf. This experience had terrorized him and this fear stayed even as he grew older. Q2. What is the ‘misadventure’ that William Douglas speaks about? Ans. The misadventure took place when Douglas went swimming in the Y.M.C.A pool. A big bruiser of a boy, about eighteen years old, picked him up and tossed him into the deep end. He swallowed a lot of water and went at once to the bottom. He planned to hit the bottom and make a big jump and come to the surface. But his plan failed and he almost had a brush with death. Q3. What was the bruising experience that Douglas had at the Y.M.C.A? Ans. To overcome his fear of water Douglas started learning swimming at the Y.M.C.A pool. However, he was tossed into the deep end of the pool by a big boy of eighteen. Douglas almost drowned in the incident and his fear of water became more intense and hard to overcome. Q4. What were the series of emotions and fears that Douglas experienced when he was thrown into the pool? What plans did he make to come to the surface? Ans. Douglas was frightened when he was thrown into the water but he did not lose his wits. He made a plan to make a big jump, to come to the surface, lie flat on it and paddle to the edge of the pool. He summoned all his strength and made a great spring upwards but instead, he came up slowly. He opened his eyes and saw nothing. He tried again but was seized by terror. He was shrieking underwater and was paralyzed-stiff and rigid with fear. He only knew one thing – that he was alive. Q5. How did this experience affect him? Ans. This experience revived the fear of water. He felt weak and trembled as he walked home. He shook and cried when he lay on his bed and could not eat anything that night. He was haunted by the frightening experience. The slightest exertion upset him, making him wobbly in the knees and sick in the stomach. Q6. What strategy did the author remember when he was drowning in the Y.M.C.A pool? Ans. Douglas thought that as he would hit the bottom of the tiled pool, he would spring up like a cork to the surface, then lie flat on the water, strike out with his arms and thrash with his legs and reach the edge of the pool. However, this plan failed. Q7. ‘I crossed to oblivion and the curtain of life fell’. Why did the author make this remark? Ans. The author had made three futile attempts to spring up to the surface but as his strength failed and energy got exhausted, he gave up and stopped all his efforts. He relaxed and passed into a state of unconsciousness and then there was no fear after that. Q8. Why was Douglas determined to get over his fear of water? Ans. Douglas after his misadventure and a near brush with death became so scared of water that he could not go fishing, canoeing, boating and swimming. He tried hard to overcome his fear but it held him firmly in its grip. Finally, one October he decided to get an instructor and learn to swim. He started going to the pool 5 days a week, an hour each day. Q9. What joys did his fear of water deprive him off? Ans. The author’s fear of water-deprived him of the joy of having fun with his friends during their fishing trips and also the thrill of canoeing, boating or swimming. The moment he would go near water, his fear of water would start haunting him. Q10. How did the instructor make a swimmer out of Douglas? Ans. The instructor put a belt around Douglas and attached a rope to the belt which went through a pulley that ran on an overhead cable. He held on to the rope and went back and forth across the pool for three months, after which his terror of water slackened a bit. He could put his face underwater and exhale and inhale with the nose out of the water. Then he learnt to kick with his legs for many weeks till he could relax. After seven months he could swim the entire length of the pool. Q11. How did Douglas make sure that he conquered the old terror? Ans. Douglas would still feel the old terror even after the instructor taught him to swim. To overcome this fear, he started talking to terror and challenged it. He would go for another length of the pool after talking to terror. Still, to ensure that he conquered it completely he went to Lake Wentworth, dived at Triggers Island and swam two miles to Stamp Act is land. He tried all strokes, put his face underwater, and mocked at his terror which fled as he swam on. Q12. What did the author mean by ‘But I was not finished’ after his swimming lessons with the instructor were over? Ans. The author’s remark meant that he was not sure whether his old terror had left him. He still felt scared and frightened while swimming the length of the pool up and down. Q13. What impression do you get of Douglas from the essay? Ans. Douglas was a brave and strong-willed person. Despite his horrifying experiences in water when he almost drowned, he didn’t give up. He resolved to overcome his fear by learning to swim. He hired an instructor and with complete focus and determination, he succeeded in learning to swim. Q14. What did Douglas experience as he went down to the bottom of the pool for the first time? Ans. The movement towards the bottom of the pool after being tossed in by a big boy was gradual as he was in the deep side. He felt nine feet to be ninety. His lungs were ready to burst before he touched the bottom. He did not lose his presence of mind and tried to make a great jump upwards. Q15. What two things did Douglas dislike to do? Which one did he have to do and why? Ans. Douglas was very thin and hated to show his skinny legs. He was also scared of going into the pool alone. So he sat by the poolside and waited for others to come. Q16. ‘On the way down I planned’, remarks Douglas. What plan had he devised and how far did it succeed? Ans. After being tossed into the deep side of the pool, Douglas planned to save himself from being drowned. He decided to spring back to the surface like a cork after touching the bottom. Then he would lie flat on it, paddle to the edge and save himself. His plan did not succeed. He tried to come up three times by putting his plan to action, but he could not do so and swallowed a lot of water instead. Q17. In what connection does Douglas mention ‘a big bruiser of a boy’? Ans. Douglas talks about the boy who tossed him into the deep end of the Y.M.C.A pool. This boy was about eighteen, he had a good physique and ‘was a big bruiser’ according to Douglas. This boy, after Douglas almost drowned, exclaimed that he was only fooling. Q18. How did Douglas initially feel when he went to the Y.M.C.A pool? What made him feel comfortable? Ans. As Douglas started going to the Y.M.C.A pool to learn how to swim. His childhood fears and memories of the unpleasant experience were revived. He gradually regained some confidence and started paddling with the help of water wings. He watched other boys and copied their style. Slowly he started feeling more comfortable. Q19. Give two character traits of Douglas that enabled him to overcome his fear of water. Ans. Douglas had a strong-will and steadfastness of purpose. It is with the help of these two traits, i.e. his determination and fixity of purpose that he was able to conquer terror and learn swimming. Q20. What were the thoughts that came to Douglas’s mind when he was going towards the bottom of the pool for the third time? Ans. When Douglas went down the third time, his effort ceased. He relaxed and his legs felt limp. He felt there was nothing to be afraid of. It was nice and he felt drowsy, ready to sleep, too tired to jump. He felt he was floating and the tender arms of his mother were carrying him gently and putting him to sleep. Q21. When did Douglas decide to learn swimming? What were the options available to him? Ans. Douglas decided to learn swimming when he was ten or eleven years old. The options available to him were the Yakima River and the YMCA pool. The Yakima River was dangerous and many had drowned in it. So he closes the YMCA pool. Q22. Why does Douglas recount a childhood experience of terror and his overcoming it? Ans. Douglas suffered a handicap. He could not go for boating, swimming, canoeing and fishing. His willpower and determination made him overcome it. He realised that there is the terror that produces. In death there is peace. He had experienced both the sensation of dying and the terror that fear of it can produce. So the will to live somehow grew in intensity. He felt a release when he overcame his fear. Q21. What two things did Douglas dislike to do? Ans. Douglas hated to walk naked into the pool and show his very thin legs. Secondly, he was afraid of going into the pool alone. He would sit on the side of the pool and wait for others. Q22. What shocking experience did Douglas have at YMCA pool? Ans. At the age of ten or eleven, William O. Douglas decided to learn and swim at the YMCA pool because it was only two or three feet deep at the shallow end. He had an aversion to the water but he felt comfortable when he paddled with his new water wings in the water. One day he went to the pool when no one else was there. He was waiting for others to come. Then there came a big bruiser who picked Douglas and ducked him into the deep end of the pool by a muscular boy, he landed in a sitting position, swallowed water and touched the bottom. He was frightened but he had not lost his wit. He thought of a strategy to come up to the surface by making a big jump when his feet touched the bottom. But his lungs were about to burst. He thought to spring back to the surface like a cork but he moved slowly. He grew panicky and saw water everywhere. He reached up as if to catch a rope with his hands but he could not clutch water and was paralysed. Q24. How did Douglas’ introduction to YMCA pool revive his childhood fear of water? Ans. At the age of ten or eleven, William O. Douglas decided to learn and swim at the Y.M.C.A pool because it was only two or three feet deep at the shallow end. He had an aversion to the water but he felt comfortable when he paddled with his new water wings in the water. One day he went to the pool when no one else was there. He was waiting for others to come. Then there came a big bruiser who picked Douglas and ducked him into the deep end of the pool by a muscular boy, he landed in a sitting position, swallowed water and touched the bottom. He was frightened but he had not lost his wit. He thought of a strategy to come up to the surface by making a big jump when his feet touched the bottom. But his lungs were about to burst. He thought to spring back to the surface like a cork but he moved slowly. 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