



BHOLI

Early Struggles of Bholi

Once upon a time in a village, there was a girl named Bholi. She had a hard time speaking clearly because of a sickness in her brain. Also, smallpox left marks on her face, making her look different. People made fun of her, calling her Bholi, meaning backward.

Bholi's Family:

Bholi was the youngest in a family with seven kids. Her parents worried about her because she was not as healthy as her siblings. They also worried about finding a good husband for her.

A New Beginning: School Opening::

One day, an important person came to start a school in the village. He asked Bholi's father to send her to school. Bholi's mother wasn't sure but eventually agreed.

Bholi's School Days:

At first, Bholi was scared of going to school. But she got nice clothes and felt happy to be around other kids. She couldn't speak well when the teacher asked her name, and the other kids laughed. The teacher was kind and told Bholi she could improve if she came to school daily.

Bholi's Progress:

Time passed, and the village became a small town. Bholi's little school turned into a big one. Bholi not only learned to speak without stammering but also became confident and smart.

Unexpected Marriage Proposal:

One day, someone wanted to marry Bholi, but he was only interested in money. He refused to marry her without a big payment.

Bholi's Brave Decision:

Even though her family managed to gather the money, Bholi said no. She surprised everyone by speaking confidently. She refused to marry someone who cared only about money. She promised to take care of her parents and teach in the school that changed her life.

Conclusion: Bholi's Inspiring Story:

Bholi's story teaches us that with support and going to school, anyone can overcome difficulties. Bholi faced her problems and stood up for herself, becoming an inspiration for others.

Extract Based Questions:

1 Her name was Sulekha, but since her childhood everyone had been calling her Bholi, the simpleton. She was the fourth daughter of Numberdar Ramlal. When she was ten months old, she had fallen off the cot on her head and perhaps it had damaged some part of her brain. That was why she remained a backward child and came to be known as Bholi, the simpleton. At birth, the child was very fair and pretty. But when she was two years old, she had an attack of small-pox. Only the eyes were saved, but the entire body was permanently disfigured by deep black pockmarks. Little Sulekha could not speak till she was five, and when at last she learnt to speak, she stammered. The other children often made fun of her and mimicked her. The other children often made fun of her and mimicked her. As a result, she talked very little."

A) What did Sulekha later on come to be known as?

Ans. Sulekha later on came to be known as Bholi.

B) Why did children make fun of her?

Ans. Children made fun of her because she stammered while speaking.

C) What does the word 'mimicked' mean?

Ans. The word 'mimicked' means to copy the speech of others.

2 "What's your name, little one?" "Bh-Bho-Bho-." She could stammer no further than that. Then she began to cry and tears flowed from her eyes in a helpless flood. She kept her head down as she sat in her corner, not daring to look up at the girls, who, she knew, were still laughing at her. When the school bell rang, all the girls scurried out of the classroom, but Bholi dared not leave her corner. Her head still lowered, she kept on sobbing. "Bholi." The teacher's voice was so soft and soothing! In all her life she had never been called like that. It touched her heart. "Get up," said the teacher. It was not a command, but just a friendly suggestion. Bholi got up. "Now tell me your name."

A) Who is 'she'?

Ans. 'She' is Sulekha, also known as Bholi.

B) Why were the girls laughing at her?

Ans. The girls were laughing at her because she had stammered while speaking her name when asked by the teacher.

c) What does the word 'daring' mean in the context of the extract?

Ans. The word 'daring' means lack of courage to do something.

Top 10 PYQs:

Short Answer Questions (40-50 words each)

1. Why did Bishamber's marriage with Bholi not take place? [CBSE 2013]

Answer: Bholi rejected Bishamber's marriage proposal because he demanded a dowry of 5,000 rupees. She valued self-respect over material wealth and refused to support the outdated dowry system. Her father, agreeing with her, declined the demand. Bholi's firm stance made her a symbol of resistance against the harmful practice of dowry, inspiring others in the village to question and challenge old traditions.

2. Did Bholi enjoy her first day in school? What made her happy on this very day?

Answer: Bholi had mixed feelings on her first day at school. She was happy to see girls of her age and was fascinated by the colorful pictures on the classroom walls. However, when the teacher asked her name, she couldn't answer properly, and the other girls laughed at her, making her cry. Despite this, her teacher's kind and encouraging words brought her happiness that day.

3. How did Bholi's teacher play an important role in changing the course of her life?

Answer: Bholi's teacher played a crucial role in transforming her life. She was kind, polite, and encouraging, which deeply touched Bholi's heart. With her affection and motivation, the teacher helped Bholi gain confidence and overcome her fear of speaking. Under her guidance, Bholi learned to read, write, and express herself clearly. Her teacher's continuous support and appreciation helped her develop self-respect and courage, ultimately shaping her into a confident and independent individual.

4. 'Dowry is negation of the girl's dignity'. Discuss with reference to the story 'Bholi'.

Answer: A girl is an individual with her own identity, and she deserves equal opportunities to become independent and strong. She is not a burden to be given away with money as compensation. The story Bholi strongly conveys this message.

Bholi's parents believed she was unattractive and unintelligent, so they were willing to offer a dowry to an old man with a limp just so he would marry her. However, Bholi, being educated and self-assured, refused to marry such a man. She proved that a woman's worth is not determined by dowry but by her abilities and dignity. Instead of succumbing to societal pressure, she chose to dedicate her life to teaching and caring for her parents, setting an example of self-respect and empowerment.

5. Why was Ramlal worried about Bholi and not about his other children?

Answer: Ramlal was not worried about his other children because they were healthy, intelligent, and good-looking. However, Bholi was different—she stammered, had scars from smallpox, and was considered a simpleton. Due to these factors, Ramlal was deeply concerned about her future, especially her prospects of finding a suitable husband.

6. What impact did Bholi's first day at school have on her?

Answer: Initially, Bholi felt nervous and cried because the other children laughed at her stammer. However, her teacher's kind words and encouragement gave her hope and made her feel valued for the first time. This experience marked the beginning of her transformation into a confident individual.

7. The chapter 'Bholi' highlights the discrimination against the girl child. Analyse.

Answer: Nature does not discriminate, but society does. Throughout history, the world has treated girls unfairly, and the story Bholi highlights many such instances. Ramlal's sons are sent to school and college, while his daughters are denied education and simply married off. Bholi's mother does not consider it necessary to seek her consent for marriage.

Furthermore, the groom is old and lame, yet he demands a dowry, and her father is willing to pay it. However, it is Bholi herself who refuses the marriage, standing up for her dignity. Instead of being praised, she is criticized and humiliated. This shows how deeply ingrained gender discrimination is, and the story serves as a powerful critique of such societal norms.

8. Bholi is a child different from others. This difference makes her an object of neglect and laughter. Elaborate.

Answer: Society often fails to accept those who are different. Bholi is not like other children—she is slow for her age, stammers when she speaks, and has pockmarks on her face due to smallpox. As a result, she suffers greatly. Her parents neglect her, not even bothering to bathe or dress her properly. They see her as a burden. The other children laugh at her and mock her speech, which makes her withdraw further into silence. She grows up with no confidence or self-esteem. The story emphasizes the need for society to be more accepting and treat every individual with love and respect, regardless of their differences.

9. "Bholi's whole personality underwent a transformation towards the end of the story". Explain.

Answer: Bholi's whose real name was Sulekha, was called "Bholi" because she was perceived as a simpleton. She started speaking only at the age of five, and even then, she stammered, making her a target of mockery. As a result, she remained silent most of the time and lacked confidence.

However, her time in school changed her. With her teacher's encouragement, she learned to read, write, and express herself. She became confident and assertive. By the end of the story, she refused to marry a greedy man who demanded dowry, choosing instead to dedicate her life to education and taking care of her parents. Her transformation from a timid girl to a bold and self-reliant woman is truly inspiring.

10. 'Love and encouragement make the impossible possible. Explain this statement on the basis of the story 'Bholi'.

Bholi was sent to school not out of her parents' belief in education but because they considered her a burden. She was neglected by her family since she was neither beautiful nor intelligent. On her first day at school, when the teacher asked her name, she stammered and began to cry, feeling humiliated by the laughter of other children. However, instead of scolding her, the teacher showed kindness, affection, and encouragement. She reassured Bholi in a friendly manner, helping her put aside her fear. Encouraged by this warmth, Bholi made an effort and managed to say her name. This small achievement filled her with surprise and hope.

The teacher's love and support transformed Bholi's personality. Over the years, she became a confident and educated young woman. Her growth was so remarkable that she found the courage to reject a greedy groom demanding dowry, choosing instead to dedicate her life to education and her parents.

Bholi's story proves that love and encouragement can bring about incredible changes, turning weaknesses into strengths and making the impossible possible.