

Textbook (FIRST FLIGHT)

Prose

A Letter to God

Introduction

This chapter has been written by G.L. Fuentes. It is about a man's unwavering faith in God.

Summary

Lencho was a hardworking farmer. He lived in a valley. His house was situated on the top of a hill. He could see his fields from there. He expected a good crop. The fields only needed some showers. He was hopeful for rain.

During his meal, it began to rain. Lencho was overjoyed. He went out to feel the pleasure of rain. But suddenly a strong wind came and large hailstones began to fall. It hailed for an hour. The field was white. The corn was totally destroyed. Lencho told his family that they would go hungry that year. There was no one who could help them. All through the night, Lencho thought of only one hope, the help of God. Lencho believed that God's eyes saw everything. He would not let them die of hunger.

The following Sunday, he wrote a letter to God. He wrote: "God, if you don't help me, my family and I will go hungry this year. I need a hundred *pesos* for sustenance". He wrote 'To God' on the envelope. He put the letter inside and went to town. At the post office, he placed a stamp on the letter and dropped it into the letter-box.

A postman showed the letter written to God to the postmaster. The postmaster was an amiable man. He laughed loudly and opened the letter. In order not to shake the writer's faith in God, the postmaster decided to answer the letter. The writer had asked for a hundred *pesos*.

Since, it was impossible for the postmaster to collect a hundred *pesos* all by himself, he asked for money from his employees. He himself gave a part of his salary. He even requested his friends to contribute some *pesos*. He put all the contributed money in an envelope addressed to Lencho and signed the letter 'God'.

The following Sunday, Lencho received the letter. When Lencho counted the money he became angry because it was only seventy *pesos*. He wrote another letter to God to send him the rest of the amount. He requested God not to send it to him by mail, because he thought that the post office employees were a bunch of crooks.

Message

The story conveys the message that a person's faith can turn mountains. Lencho's faith in God enabled him to get help from the postmaster.



Extract Based Questions ▼

1. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

With a satisfied expression he regarded the field of ripe corn with its flowers, draped in a curtain of rain. But suddenly a strong wind began to blow and along with the rain very large hailstones began to fall. These truly did resemble new silver coins. The boys, exposing themselves to the rain, ran out to collect the frozen pearls.

"It's really getting bad now," exclaimed the man. "I hope it passes quickly." It did not pass quickly. For an hour the hail rained on the house, the garden, the hillside, the cornfield,

on the whole valley. The field was white, as if covered with salt.

- What did the boys do when large hailstones began to fall?
- State whether the given statement is True or False.
The field was white as it was covered with salt.
- Lencho calls the raindrops 'new coins'. Elaborate with reference to the extract.
- Which phrase would correctly substitute 'a satisfied', in the given sentence from the extract?
With a satisfied expression he regarded the field of ripe corn with its flowers.

Answers

- (a) When large hailstones began to fall the boys, exposing themselves to the rain, ran out to collect the frozen pearls.
- (b) False
- (c) Lencho's fields needed a downpour or at least a shower to be ready for harvest. So, Lencho was eagerly waiting for the rain. He was very happy when it started to rain as it would assure a good harvest that would fetch him plenty of money. So, he calls the raindrops 'new coins'.
- (d) a contented

TR ! CK

If you don't know the meaning, you can try to guess it from the sentence in which the word has been used in the extract.

2. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

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.

"Don't be so upset, even though this seems like a total loss. Remember, no one dies of hunger."

(a) Lencho's family needed help from:

- (i) Lencho
- (ii) God
- (iii) The postman
- (iv) The postmaster

(b) What was the 'single hope'?

(c) "Remember, no one dies of hunger." Who said this?

- (i) God
- (ii) The postmaster
- (iii) Lencho
- (iv) Lencho's wife

(d) Why did Lencho need help?

Answers

- (a) (ii) God
- (b) The 'single hope' was the help from God. Lencho's crops were completely destroyed by a hailstorm. He feared that his family would go hungry that year. But in spite of all this, Lencho had one hope in his heart that God would help him.
- (c) (iii) Lencho
- (d) Lencho needed help because a hailstorm had destroyed his crops.

TR ! CK

If you don't know the antonym, eliminate the options which can't be the answer clearly. It will help you in choosing the right answer.

3. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

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. Lencho was an ox of a man, working like an animal in the fields, but still he knew how to write. The following Sunday, at

daybreak, he began to write a letter which he himself would carry to town and place in the mail.

(a) Why has Lencho been called 'an ox of a man'?

(b) State whether the given statement is True or False.

Lencho wrote the letter in the evening.

(c) What had Lencho been instructed?

(d) Complete the analogy with a word from the text:

night : down :: despair :

Answers

- (a) Lencho has been called 'an ox of a man' because he worked hard.
- (b) False
- (c) Lencho had been instructed that God's eyes see everything, even what is deep in one's conscience. He had a firm faith in God. He believed that God helped innocent people in their difficult times.
- (d) hope

4. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

God could not have made a mistake, nor could he have denied Lencho what he had requested.

Immediately, Lencho went up to the window to ask for paper and ink. On the public writing-table, he started to write, with much wrinkling of his brow, caused by the effort he had to make to express his ideas. When he finished, he went to the window to buy a stamp which he licked and then affixed to the envelope with a blow of his fist.

(a) He went to the window to:

- (i) scold the postman
- (ii) meet the postmaster
- (iii) take the money
- (iv) ask for paper and ink

(b) Why was Lencho angry?

(c) Lencho thought that:

- (i) God made a mistake
- (ii) the postmaster was mistaken
- (iii) God could not make a mistake
- (iv) None of the above

(d) What did Lencho buy?

Answers

- (a) (iv) ask for paper and ink
- (b) Lencho was angry because he received only 70 pesos. Lencho had written a letter to God telling him about his problems and asking for 100 pesos. But he received only 70 pesos.
- (c) (iii) God could not make a mistake
- (d) Lencho bought a stamp.

5. Read the extract given below and answer the questions that follow:

The moment the letter fell into the mailbox the postmaster went to open it. 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. But don't send it to me through the mail because the post office employees are a bunch of crooks.' Lencho."

(CBSE 2021 Term-1, Modified)

(a) Why did Lencho write the second letter?

(b) State whether the given statement is True or False.

On reading the letter, the postmaster was dismayed.

(c) Why did Lencho call the employees 'a bunch of crooks'?

(d) Complete the analogy with a word from the text:

fell : dropped :: demanded :

Answers

(a) Lencho wrote the second letter because he had received only 70 pesos.

(b) True

(c) Lencho called the post office employees 'a bunch of crooks' because he thought that God had sent him 100 pesos but the post office employees stole 30 pesos. He had a deep faith in God and so he doubted the post office employees.

(d) asked

Short Answer Type Questions

Q 1. Why did Lencho keep watching towards the north-east in the sky?

OR

What did Lencho hope for?

Ans. Lencho had sown corn in his fields. The only thing that the fields now needed was a downpour or at least a shower. So, Lencho kept watching towards the north-east, waiting for the rain bearing clouds to come.

Q 2. Lencho calls the raindrops 'new coins'. Why does he call them so?

OR

What are the raindrops compared to and why?

(CBSE 2023)

Ans. Lencho's fields needed a downpour or at least a shower to be ready for harvest. So, when the rain fell, he compared the raindrops with 'new coins' as he was assured of a good harvest that would fetch him plenty of money.

Q 3. Why did Lencho's happiness change into concern?

Ans. When big drops of rain started to fall Lencho was very happy as he thought that this would benefit his crops. But suddenly a strong wind began to blow and along with the rain large hailstones began to fall. This caused Lencho's happiness to change into concern.

Q 4. How did the rain change? What happened to Lencho's fields?

Ans. The rain changed into a hailstorm. Very large hailstones began to fall. Lencho's fields were covered with the hailstones. The fields were white and they appeared to be covered with salt.

Q 5. What were Lencho's feelings when the hail stopped?

(CBSE 2020)

OR

Why did the night turn sorrowful for Lencho after the rains?

(CBSE 2023)

OR

Explain how the description of the devastation caused by the hailstorm reflects the sadness within Lencho, in *A Letter to God*?

Refer to the given lines, from the text

Not a leaf remained on the trees. The corn was totally destroyed. The flowers were gone from the plants. Lencho's soul was filled with sadness.

(CBSE SQP 2023-24)

Ans. The night turned sorrowful for Lencho after the hail stopped because the hailstorm had destroyed his crop badly. It spoiled his hard work and left him with nothing.

The description of the devastation caused by the hailstorm reflects a sense of emptiness and loss, which mirrors Lencho's inner feelings of despair and disappointment. His soul was full with sadness because he had nothing to feed his family and he thought that his family would starve the whole year.

Q 6. Why did Lencho write a letter to God? (CBSE 2019)

OR

In what way would writing a letter to God help Lencho tide over his crisis? (CBSE 2023)

Ans. Lencho's crop was completely destroyed by the hailstorm. Lencho and his family thought that they would go hungry that year. However, Lencho had deep faith in God. He believed that if God came to know of their plight, he would definitely help him. So, he wrote a letter to God telling him about his problems and asking for 100 pesos so that he could sow his fields again and be able to sustain his family.

Q 7. Did Lencho's letter reach the right place? What happened then?

Ans. No, Lencho's letter did not reach the right place. Lencho had written a letter to God. The letter did not reach God. Instead it fell into the hands of the postman who then showed it to the postmaster. The postmaster was a kind-hearted man. He was moved by Lencho's faith in God. So, he decided to help him. He collected money from his acquaintances and even donated a part of his salary and managed to collect 70 pesos, which he then sent to Lencho. So, we can say that it reached the right hands.

Q 8. Why does the postmaster send money to Lencho? Why does he sign the letter 'God'?

Ans. The postmaster sends money to Lencho because he does not want to shake Lencho's faith in God. When he read the letter, he was moved and wished he had

the same faith in God. He signs the letter 'God' to keep Lencho's faith in God alive.

Q 9. How did Lencho react after counting the money?

Ans. Lencho became angry when he counted the money. He had asked for 100 pesos but he received only 70 pesos. He believed that God could not make a mistake. He thought that the post office employees has stolen his money. So, he wrote another letter to God, and asked him to send the rest of the amount. He also made a complaint that the post office employees were a bunch of crooks.

Q 10. Who does Lencho think has taken the rest of the money? What is the irony in the situation?

Ans. Lencho had asked for 100 pesos but he received only 70 pesos. Lencho thinks that the employees of the post office are a bunch of crooks who have taken the rest of the money. The irony of the situation is that the employees of the post office had contributed to help Lencho and now they were blamed of theft by none other than Lencho.

 Long Answer Type Questions ➡

Q 1. What were Lencho's feelings when the hailstorm stopped? Whom and what did he ask for help?

Ans. Lencho had sown corn in his fields and the crop was nearly ready for harvest. It only needed a downpour or at least a shower. So, Lencho was eagerly awaiting the rain-bearing clouds and was very happy when it started to rain. But his happiness was shortlived. The rain was accompanied by a hailstorm which lasted for nearly an hour. After that Lencho's fields appeared as if they were covered with salt. Not a leaf remained on the plants. The corn was totally destroyed. Lencho's soul was filled with sadness. That night he told his family that all their labour was in vain and he thought that they would have to go hungry that year. But he consoled them by saying that no one dies of hunger and we must have faith in God. So, that night he decided to ask for help from God. He was brought up with the belief that God sees everything. So, he decided to ask God to help him in his hour of distress. He wrote a letter to God telling him of his woes and asked for 100 pesos that will help him to sow new crop and provide for his family's sustenance.

Q 2. What did Lencho write to God? What was Lencho's belief?

Ans. Lencho had worked hard all through the year in his fields and the crop looked promising. It only needed a downpour or at least a shower. But a hailstorm came and destroyed the whole crop. Nothing was left. Lencho was distraught but he found console

in the thought that God would help him. It was his belief that God sees everything, even what is deep in one's conscience. So, he decided to write a letter to God. In the letter, he narrated his plight and asked for 100 pesos in order to be able to sow his fields again and to provide for his family's sustenance until the new crops came.

He had full belief in God. He believed that God would definitely help him in his hour of distress.

Q 3. In the lesson 'A Letter to God', what moral values does the postmaster display in his behaviour?

(CBSE 2018)

Ans. Lencho was a hardworking farmer whose crops were completely destroyed by a hailstorm. He feared that his family would go hungry that year. But in spite of all this, Lencho had one hope in his heart that God would help him. This hope motivated him to write a letter to God in which he narrated all his problems and asked for 100 pesos which would help him to sow new crops and provide for his family. That letter reached the postmaster and he was touched by Lencho's faith in God. In order to sustain that hope, the postmaster made efforts to arrange for the money. He asked his employees, family and friends to donate for a charitable purpose. He managed to collect 70 pesos which he sent to Lencho and signed the letter as 'God'. The moral values displayed by this act of postmaster are compassion, love for fellow beings, sympathy and charity.

Q 4. 'I wish I had the faith of the man who wrote this letter.' Describe Lencho's character in the light of this statement.

Ans. Lencho was a poor farmer. He depended for his livelihood on his crops. His crops were completely destroyed. He was therefore in deep distress. There was no one he could have approached for help. He had strong faith in God. He knew that God helped innocent people in distress. Being a simple-hearted man, Lencho decided to write a letter to God. He requested God to help him in his distress and asked for a hundred pesos for his survival and also for buying seeds for sowing. The letter reached the postmaster and he wished that he had the faith of the man who wrote this letter. He decided to help Lencho and sent him 70 pesos. On receiving the money, Lencho believes that it is God who has helped him. When he discovers that there are only 70 pesos in the envelope even then it never crosses his mind that God might not have sent him that amount. His strong faith in God makes him doubt the post office employees who have actually helped him. So, it can be concluded that Lencho was a simple man who believed that God helps everyone in distress and does not let anyone die of hunger. He is naive and innocent like a child.

Q 5. 'A Letter to God' illustrates the belief that faith in God is always rewarded. Lencho has a firm faith in God that he helps his devotees. Write a paragraph on the values involved in it.

Ans. Faith in God means a firm belief in the almighty. It also means that he helps us in our difficulties. We may not acknowledge it, but it is a fact that faith in him gives us a hope and helps us to tide over difficult times. This is illustrated by Lencho's faith in God. When his crop is destroyed, he writes a letter to God to send him a hundred pesos. The postmaster reads Lencho's letter and decides to help Lencho by sending him seventy pesos. Lencho stands rewarded because of his faith in God. Likewise, if we believe in God, we get a hope and support which helps us to pull out in times of difficulties. At the same time, this faith enables us to face the odds of life with strength and courage.

Q 6. If you had been Lencho and this incident would have happened with you, what would you have done? Describe your feelings in simple words.

Ans. If I had been Lencho and this incident would have happened with me, the way of solving my problem would have been different. I am quite familiar with the realities of the world. I know that God cannot receive any letter by the post and neither can God help me directly. God only helps those who help themselves.

I would have tried to search another work for some time so that I could survive and feed my family. Then, I would have tried to save some money to sow my field again.

Q 7. 'Lencho had deep faith in God but doubt on man.' Comment.

Ans. Lencho has deep faith in God. He believes that God sees everything, even what is deep in one's conscience. So, when his crop is totally destroyed by the hailstorm, he decides to ask for help from God. He writes a letter to God asking for 100 pesos to provide for the sustenance of his family and to sow new crop. He addresses the letter 'To God', affixes a stamp and then posts it. The postman shows the letter to the postmaster. The postmaster reads the letter and is moved by the man's belief in God. He decides to help Lencho and safeguard his belief in God. So, he collects money from his acquaintances and also donates a part of his salary. Still he is able to collect only 70 pesos. He puts the money in an envelope which is then delivered to Lencho. Lencho is not at all surprised to find an envelope with money addressed to him. However, when he counts the money, he becomes angry on finding only 70 pesos. He thinks that God has sent him 100 pesos but the post office employees has stolen 30 pesos. So, it can be said that Lencho had deep faith in God but doubt on man. ●