

# **MY CHILDHOOD**

## **I. Answer these questions in one or two sentences each.**

Question 1.

Where was Dr. Abdul Kalam's house?

Answer:

Abdul Kalam's house was on the Mosque Street in Rameswaram.

Question 2.

What do you think Dinamani is the name of? Give a reason for your answer.

Answer:

Dinamani is the name of a newspaper. Abdul Kalam attempts to trace the Second World War's news in the headlines of this newspaper.

Question 3.

Who were Dr. Abdul Kalam's school friends? What did they later become?

Answer:

Ramanadha Sastry, Aravindan and Sivaprakasan were his school friends. Ramanadha Sastry became a priest of the Rameswaram temple. Aravindan went into the business of arranging transport for visiting pilgrims. Sivaprakasan became a catering contractor for the Southern Railways.

Question 4.

How did Dr. Abdul Kalam earn his first wages?

Answer:

Abdul Kalam earned his first wages by distributing newspapers.

Question 5.

Had he earned any money before that? In what way?

Answer:

Yes, he earned money before also. He used to collect the tamarind seeds and sell them to a provision shop on the Mosque Street. A day's collection would fetch him the princely sum of one anna.

## **I. Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words).**

Question 1.

How does the author describe:

1. his father
2. his mother
3. himself?

Answer:

1. The author describes his father as a wise and generous person. He felt happy when he helped others. He did not have much formal education and riches. He was a man of confidence and great wisdom. He avoided inessential comforts and luxuries.
2. His mother was a noble and kind- hearted woman. She used to feed a large number of people. She had all the attributes of a typical Indian mother.
3. I was born into a middle-class Tamil family. I was a short boy with rather undistinguished looks, born to tall and handsome parents. I studied physics and aerospace engineering and became a scientist.

Question 2.

What characteristics does he say he inherited from his parents?

Answer:

The author inherited humility and benevolence from his parents. He learnt lessons in honesty and integrity from his parents. He was self-disciplined because of his parents' exemplary life.

**III. Discuss these questions in class with your teacher and then write down your answers in two or three paragraphs each.**

Question 1.

“ On the whole, the small society of Rameswaram was very rigid in terms of the segregation of different social groups,” says the author.

1. Which social groups does he mention? Were these groups easily identifiable (for example, by the way they dressed)?
2. Were they aware only of their differences or did they also naturally share friendships and experiences? (Think of the bedtime stories in Kalam's house; of who his friends were ; and of what used to take place in the pond near his house.)
3. The author speaks both of people who were very aware of the differences among them and those who tried to bridge these differences. Can you identify such people in the text?
4. Narrate two incidents that show how differences can be created, and also how they can be resolved. How can people change their attitudes?

Answer:

1. The author talks about the people who belong to various castes and follow various religious preachings. Yes, these groups were easily identifiable. Their dressing, traditions, culture and rituals were different.
2. They did share their personal experiences and friendships. Lakshmana Sastry summoned the teacher who separated the author and his friend in the class and told him that he should not spread the poison of social inequality and communal intolerance in the minds of innocent children.
3. The school teacher encouraged communal differences and Lakshmana Sastry and Sivasubramania Iyer discouraged this malpractice.
4. The influential people can do both the things. A teacher has the ability to bridge communal differences and can play with sentiments of the innocent and ignorant people. This is what the new teacher did. But the Science teacher Sivasubramania Iyer changed his wife's attitude and showed her the right path.

Question 2.

1. Why did Dr. Abdul Kalam want to leave Rameswaram?
2. What did his father say to this?
3. What do you think his words mean? Why do you think he spoke those words?

Answer:

1. Dr. Abdul Kalam wanted to leave Rameswaram to study at the district headquarters in Ramanathapuram.
2. His father said that he knew he had to go away to grow. He gave the example of a seagull and said that a seagull flies across the sun alone and without a nest.
3. He spoke these words because he intended to hone his skills. He knew the harsh reality of life that children may have to live far from their parents to make their career and earn their livelihood. So he showed his wisdom and intelligence in uttering these words

