

Word-Meaning: Coming up—rising up, ऊपर आता हुआ। Shining—gleaming, चमकते हुए। Looking forward—waiting for something, प्रतीक्षा करके हुए।

Questions:
(a) Did the sky remain clear the whole night?

(b) What was the narrator flying?

(c) What was he dreaming of?

(d) Was he able to spend his holiday with his family the next day?

Answers:
(a) No, after one thirty the sky suddenly became very cloudy.

(b) The narrator was flying his old Dakota aeroplane.

(c) He was dreaming of his holiday and being with his family.

(d) Yes, he spent his holiday with his family the next day.

Passage-2: (Page 37)
I checked the map and the compass, switched over to my second and last fuel tank, and turned the Dakota twelve degrees west towards England. 'I'll be in time for breakfast,' I thought. A good big English breakfast! Everything was going well—it was an easy flight.

Word-Meaning: Compass—an instrument consisting of a magnetised needle to show N and S directions, दिशा-सूचक। In time—by that time, उस समय तक।
In towards—in the direction of something, तरफ।

Questions:

(a) What did he check up?

(b) What did he switch over to?

(c) With whom did he want to have his breakfast?

(d) How did his easy flight turn to a horrible one?

Answers:
(a) He checked the map and the compass.
(b) He switched over to his second and last fuel tank.
(c) He wanted to have his breakfast with his family.
(d) All of a sudden the sky became so cloudy that he was unable to see anything outside the aeroplane.

Passage-3: (Pages 37 & 38)
Inside the clouds, everything was suddenly black. It was impossible to see anything outside the aeroplane. The old aeroplane jumped and twisted in the air. I looked at the compass. I couldn't believe my eyes: the compass was turning round and round and round. It was dead. It would not work! The other instruments were suddenly dead, too. I tried the radio.

Word-Meaning: Suddenly—happening unexpectedly, अचानक। Twisted—to bend into a shape, घुमा। Believe—have faith, विश्वास करना। Instruments—tools, उपकरण, यंत्र।

Questions:

(a) Why was it impossible to see anything outside the aeroplane?

(b) How did the old aeroplane behave?

(c) Why couldn't he believe his eyes?

(d) Was the radio working properly even then?

Answers:
(a) It was impossible to see anything outside because the aeroplane was amidst dark black clouds.
(b) The old aeroplane jumped and twisted in the air.
(c) He couldn't believe his eyes that the compass which was working smoothly few moments ago was dead now.
(d) No, the radio was dead too.

Passage-4: (Page 38)

There was no answer. The radio was dead too. I had no radio, no compass, and I could not see where I was. I was lost in the storm. Then, in the black clouds quite near me, I saw another aeroplane. It had no lights on its wings, but I could see it flying next to me *through* the storm. I could see the pilot's face—*turned* towards me. I was very *glad* to see another person. He lifted one hand and waved. "Follow me," he was saying. "Follow me."

Word-Meaning: Through—from one side to the other, आर-पार। Turned—twisted, मुड़ा हुआ। Glad—happy, प्रसन्न। Waved—moved hand, हाथ हिलाया।

Questions:

- Where did he get no answer from?
- How did he feel at that time?
- What did he see flying next to him?
- Was the narrator known to the other pilot?

Answers:

- He got no answer from Paris Control.
- He was lost in the storm and the compass and radio were dead.
- He saw another aeroplane flying next to him.
- No, the narrator was completely unknown to the other pilot.

Passage-5: (Pages 38 & 39)

He turned his aeroplane slowly to the north, in front of my Dakota, so that it would be easier for me to follow him. I was very happy to go behind the *strange* aeroplane like an *obedient* child. After half an hour the strange black aeroplane was there *in front of* me in the clouds. Now there was only enough *fuel* in the old Dakota's last tank to fly for five or ten minutes more. I was starting to feel *frightened* again. But then he started to go down and I followed through the storm.

Word-Meaning: Strange—uncommon, विचित्र। Obedient—dutiful, आज्ञाकारी। In front of—just before, सामने। Fuel—material for burning, ईंधन। Frightened—terrified, डर गया/भयभीत हो गया।

Questions:

- Where did the other plane turn to?
- How was the narrator following him?
- How much petrol was left in the old Dakota for flying?
- Why did he feel frightened again?

Answers:

- The other aeroplane turned slowly towards the north in front of his Dakota.
- The narrator was following him like an obedient child.
- There was only enough petrol left in the old Dakota to fly for five or ten minutes.
- He felt frightened again as the petrol could last only for five or ten minutes.

Passage-6: (Page 39)

Suddenly I came out of the clouds and saw two long straight lines of lights in front of me. It was a *runway*! An airport! I was safe! I turned to look for my friend in the black aeroplane, but the sky was *empty*. There was nothing there. The black aeroplane was gone. I could not see it anywhere.

Word-Meaning: Runway—way on the ground for taking off and landing of aeroplanes, जहाजों के उड़ने और उतरने के लिये जमीन पर जगह या पट्टी। Empty—vacant, खाली।

Questions:

- How did the narrator reach the airport safely?
- What was the two long straight lines of light, and why was he safe now?
- What did the narrator turn to look for?
- Where did the black aeroplane go after leading the narrator to an airport?

Answers:

- (a) An strange black aeroplane helped him to come out of the clouds and reach the airport safely.
- (b) It was the runway of an airport where he could land safely.
- (c) The narrator turned and looked for the man who had helped him.
- (d) Actually, there was no other aeroplane flying in the sky than the narrator's one. Only God knows who he was.

Passage-7: (Page 39)

"Another aeroplane? Up there in this storm? No other aeroplanes were flying tonight. Yours was the only one I could see on the *radar*." So who helped me to *arrive* there *safely* without a compass or a radio, and without any more fuel in my tanks? Who was the pilot on the strange black aeroplane, flying in the storm, without lights?

Word-Meaning: Radar—an equipment that searches the flying objects, रडार यंत्र। Arrive—reach to a place, पहुँचना।
Safely—protectively, सुरक्षित।

Questions:

- (a) What did the woman in the control centre say?
- (b) Who helped him to arrive safely without a compass or a radio?
- (c) Who was the pilot on the strange black aeroplane?
- (d) Did the narrator find out any answers to his own questions?

Answers:

- (a) The woman in the control centre replied that the narrator's plane was the only one flying that stormy night.
- (b) A strange pilot guided the narrator to arrive safely without a compass or a radio.
- (c) Only God could tell who was the pilot on the strange black aeroplane.
- (d) No, the narrator didn't get any answers to his own questions.

NCERT TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

Thinking about the Text (Page 40)

Q1. "I'll take the risk." What is the risk?

Why does the narrator take it?

Ans. The narrator was flying his old Dakota aeroplane. But suddenly he found huge dark clouds just before him. Now the risk was to fly the aeroplane straight into the storm. Although he did not have enough fuel, he decided to make the trip as he wanted to see his family and have a good breakfast with them.

Q2. Describe the narrator's experience as he flew the aeroplane into the storm.

Ans. The narrator took the risk to fly the aeroplane straight into the cloudy storm. He did so because he was very eager to go home and meet his family members. He wanted to have a good breakfast with them. Inside the clouds, he was not able to see anything. His aeroplane started jumping and twisting in the air. After this he found that the compass and the radio were not working. They were almost dead. He was totally confused what to do.

Q3. Why does the narrator say, "I landed and was not sorry to walk away from the old Dakota....?"

Ans. When the narrator safely landed on the earth, he wanted to say 'Thank you' to the pilot of the black aeroplane who saved his life. But the control room was at some distance. To reach there he had to walk that distance. But keeping in mind the importance of that pilot, he didn't feel sorry to walk away from the old Dakota.

Q4. What made the woman in the control centre look at the narrator strangely?

Ans. The narrator's inquiry for another aeroplane made the woman in the control centre to look at him strangely. As soon as the narrator landed on the runway safely, he went to the control centre to know about the pilot of the black aeroplane to thank him. But the woman was very surprised at his question because there was no other aeroplane flying that night.

Q5. Who do you think helped the narrator to reach safely? Discuss this among

Ans. During a Thunderstorm: Accidents don't have a time-table. They generally catch you unaware. Same thing happened to me yesterday. I was coming home from my school. Suddenly, the sky was covered with dark clouds. A strong gale started blowing. The vision became very limited. Hardly could one see beyond ten yards. A sand storm hit the town. It became quite dangerous to walk during the violent storm. Soon the very hell was let loose.

The fury of the storm was unstoppable. I thought it prudent to take shelter in the nearby shop. I could see the roof-sheets of huts flying in the air. Many trees were uprooted. A scooterist was trapped inside the storm and crashed against a tree. He was wounded. Fortunately, it started drizzling. The fury of the storm calmed down. After some time everything became normal. The storm receded. But it left a trail of destruction behind it.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SOLVED

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Why was the narrator happy and what was he dreaming of?

Ans. It was a clear and cloudless night. The moon had come up in the east. Stars were shining above. The narrator was happy. He was flying high up above the sleeping countryside. He was dreaming of his holiday and being with his family.

Q2. Why and when did he call Paris control-room?

Ans. It was one thirty in the morning. He wanted to call Paris control. He switched on the radio and told that Dakota DS 088 was on his way to England. The narrator got the necessary instruction that he needed. He was asked to turn twelve degrees west towards England.

Q3. What did he find when he checked the map and the compass?

Ans. The narrator checked the map and the compass. He switched over to his second and last fuel tank. He turned the Dakota twelve degrees west towards England. He thought that he would be in time for breakfast. Everything was going well and it was an easy flight.

Q4. Why didn't he return to Paris when he saw the storm clouds?

Ans. Paris was 150 kilometres behind him when he saw the storm clouds. They were huge. They looked like black mountains standing in front of him. He could not fly up and over them as he didn't have enough fuel. He thought of going back to Paris but changed his idea. He decided to go to England to be in time for breakfast.

Q5. The narrator had two options before risking himself entering the storm clouds? Why didn't he choose them?

Ans. Definitely, the narrator had two options before him if he didn't want to take the risk of entering the storm cloud. He could turn back and go to Paris which was about 150 kilometres behind him. Another option was to fly up and over the dark clouds. But he didn't choose any of the options. He wanted to be in England to have his breakfast in time. He couldn't fly around the clouds to the north or south as he didn't have enough fuel to fly.

Q6. What did he do when he was inside the clouds?

Ans. The narrator took the risk of entering the black storm clouds. Inside them everything was suddenly black. Nothing could be seen outside. The old plane jumped and twisted in the air. He couldn't believe his eyes when his compass was dead. His other instruments didn't work and were dead too. He tried to contact Paris control on the radio but received no answer.

Q7. How was the narrator lost in the storm clouds and what did he try to do to come out of them?

Ans. The narrator had entered the storm clouds. Nothing was seen outside. Everything suddenly turned black. The old plane jumped and twirled in the sky. He looked at the compass. It was dead. He tried other instruments but they also refused to work. He tried the radio to contact Paris control but no answer came from there.

Q8. Who rescued the narrator when he was hopelessly lost in the storm clouds?

Ans. There seemed no hope for the narrator. He was hopelessly lost in the storm clouds. His compass and other instruments were dead. Even Paris control didn't respond.

In such a hopeless situation, the narrator saw another aeroplane flying next to him. It had no light on its wings but he could see the pilot's face. The pilot came to his help. When he said "Follow me," the narrator followed him like an obedient child.

Q9. How and when did the narrator feel that he was safe now?

Ans. When the pilot of another plane came to the narrator's help, he was extremely happy. When he said "Follow me," the narrator obeyed him like an obedient child. The strange black aeroplane was still guiding him. The narrator got worried as the old Dakota had petrol enough to fly for five or ten minutes. Suddenly when he was going down, he found himself out of clouds. He saw two long strait lines of lights of the runway. There was an airport where he could land safely.

Q10. Did the narrator meet the pilot of the black aeroplane? How did he and his aeroplane disappear in the sky?

Ans. No, the narrator didn't meet his rescuer. When he was out of the storm clouds, he looked back. He found no trace of the aeroplane. Nor did he see the face of the pilot. Only God knows where they disappeared. Even the control room couldn't record their presence.

Q11. Why did the narrator want to meet the woman in control tower? Did he get any information about the mysterious disappearance of the black aeroplane and its pilot?

Ans. The narrator didn't know how the pilot and the black aeroplane disappeared in the space. He wanted some definite information from the woman in the control room about them. She told him that on that stormy night no plane was in the sky except his old Dakota. So, the narrator couldn't know anything about the mysterious man who helped him to arrive safely without a compass or a radio.

Q12. What is the message that Frederick wants to give to the readers through the lesson 'The Black Aeroplane'?

Ans. Never say 'die' till the end. Never lose hope in the most hopeless situation. No one knows who may come to save you. The narrator was really in such a hopeless situation when he lost contact with Paris

control and all his instruments and the compass were dead. Then came the mysterious pilot of the black aeroplane to guide the narrator to safety.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Why and when did the narrator say that 'everything was going well' it was an easy flight'?

Ans. After the old Dakota left Paris 150 kilometres behind, it enjoyed a smooth sailing in the air. Everything was going well. The narrator was enjoying rather an easy flight. The moon was coming up in the east and stars were shining in the clear sky. The aeroplane was flying up above the sleeping countryside. It was flying over France back to England. The narrator was dreaming of his holiday and looking forward to being with his family. He contacted Paris control. He was asked to turn 12 degrees west. He looked at his watch. It was only thirty in the morning. It was only after he had left Paris 150 kilometres behind when he faced the terrible storm clouds. Before this, it was really an enjoyable and safe journey.

Q2. The narrator had two options of avoiding the terrible storm clouds. Why didn't he use them? Was his decision of flying straight into storm clouds a sound decision? Give a reasoned answer.

Ans. The narrator could see black mountains of clouds all around him. They were storm clouds. He had two options and by using them he could avoid the terrible storm clouds. He could go back to Paris. He had left Paris 150 kilometres behind. He wanted to go back but the temptation of having an early breakfast at home stopped him. He couldn't fly up and above the storm clouds either. He didn't have enough fuel to fly around them to the north or south. It seems that flying back to Paris would have been the best option in those circumstances. He couldn't fly north and south of the storm as he hadn't enough fuel in the second tank. His decision of flying straight into the storm clouds was motivated by his having an early English breakfast with his family. It was rather a bold but risky decision. He would have

been in deep trouble, had the pilot of the strange black aeroplane not helped him to safely.

Q3. Describe the appearance of the strange black aeroplane in the most hopeless situation. How did the pilot of the black aeroplane help the narrator to come out of the storm clouds and land safely?

Ans. The narrator was really in deep trouble. The huge mountains of black clouds were around him. The old Dakota aeroplane was jumping and twisting in the air. His compass was dead. The other instruments were dead too. Nothing worked for him. Even his efforts to contact Paris control failed. The radio was dead too. In such a hopeless situation, the sudden appearance of a mysterious black aeroplane was like God's sent help for him. There were no lights on the wings of that black aeroplane. The narrator could see the pilot's face. He was saying "Follow me". The narrator was totally lost. He thought that the pilot was trying to help him. So he followed the black aeroplane like an obedient child. He was frightened as he had fuel enough to last for five or ten minutes. Suddenly, he came out of the clouds. He saw two long straight lines of lights in front of him. It was a runway. "An airport!" he cried. He

was out of danger and could land safely. He turned to look for his rescuer in the black aeroplane, but the sky was empty.

Q4. Who was the rescuer in the strange black aeroplane? Did the lady in the control room help the narrator in knowing anything about the man who helped him to land safely?

Ans. Who saved the narrator when he had lost all contacts on the radio with Paris control? Who was the pilot of the black aeroplane who helped the narrator to land safely without a compass, without the radio and without much fuel? These questions remained unsolved puzzles. Even the lady in the control room couldn't detect any other plane on the stormy night other than the old Dakota on the radar. The mysterious pilot of the black aeroplane was like the God's help sent to the narrator to land safely. The narrator was in real trouble before the mysterious black aeroplane appeared near him. He was lost among the mountains of black clouds in front of him. To make things worse his compass became dead. The other instruments became dead too. He couldn't contact Paris control as the radio was dead too. God knows what would have been his condition, had the pilot of the black aeroplane not guided him out of storm clouds to safety.

SELF ASSESSMENT

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Where was the narrator dreaming of?
2. Why did he fly straight into the storm?
3. What were the two options before him?
4. Why didn't he choose any of the options to avoid the storm clouds?
5. Was the narrator's decision to enter the storm clouds a sensible one? How?
6. How did the pilot of the black plane guide the narrator out of the storm clouds?
7. Why did the narrator go to the control room?
8. In your view who was the man who helped the narrator to land safely?

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1. How was the old Dakota's air journey smooth and easy in the beginning? What made it unpleasant afterwards?
2. Describe the storm clouds and how did the narrator find himself in a hopeless position when his instruments became dead?
3. The pilot who helped the narrator to land safely remained a mystery which was not solved till the end. Comment.

