



1. Describe Bholi's feelings when her teacher assured to make her the most learned in her village.

Bholi was sent to school because the Tehsildar compelled Ramlal to send one of his daughters to school, so that it may prove a role model for other girls. She was a slow learner and stammered while speaking and all the children in the school made fun of her. But her teacher encouraged her and made all efforts to make her the most learned in her village. She was impressed by her soft and soothing voice. She felt comfortable and stopped stammering. Now she was full of confidence and learned the entire syllabus taught by her teacher.

2. Why was Bholi frightened to go to school?

Bholi was scared to go to school because no girl in the family had ever gone to school. The next day, when Ramlal held her hand to take her to school, Bholi was frightened. She did not know what school was. She thought that perhaps her parents were punishing her by sending her to school. So, she cried in terror and pulled her hand away from her father's grip.

3. What preparations were made to send Bholi to school? When did she begin to think that school was a better place than her home?

Ramlal asked his wife to arrange some decent clothes for Bholi. He didn't want the teachers and other school girls to make any bad image of the family. Therefore, Bholi was lucky to get a clean dress that didn't fit Champa. Bholi was bathed. Oil was rubbed into her dry and matted hair. Only then Bholi began to think that she was going to a better place than her home.

4. How was Bholi's first day at the school? Did she enjoy it?

Ramlal handed over Bholi to the headmistress. She asked Bholi to sit down in a corner in one of the classes. Bholi was glad to find so many girls of her age in the class. She hoped to make one of them her friend. She couldn't understand what the teacher was saying. She liked the pictures of birds and animals on the wall. The teacher asked her name but Bholi couldn't pronounce it in spite of many efforts. The kind and friendly teacher encouraged her and Bholi could say. "Bh-Bh-Bho-Bholi". The teacher patted her on her success. Bholi felt comforted and relieved.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Which post did Ramlal hold in the village?

- (A) Sarpanch (B) Numberdar
(C) Tehsildar (D) Headmaster

Ans. (B) Numberdar

2. Who was Ramlal's eldest daughter?

- (A) Radha (B) Mangla
(C) Champa (D) Sulekha

Ans. (A) Radha

3. Why did Tehsildar come to Ramlal's village?

- (A) to perform the opening ceremony of the girl's school
- (B) to attend Radha's wedding
- (C) to meet the village people
- (D) all of the above

Ans. (A) to perform the opening ceremony of the girl's school

4. What was Bholi's reaction when Ramlal asked her to go to school for the first time?

- (A) she was happy
- (B) she was excited
- (C) she cried with fear
- (D) none of the above

Ans. (C) she cried with fear

5. Who was Lakshmi?

- (A) Bholi's mother
- (B) Bholi's cow
- (C) Bholi's teacher
- (D) Bholi's classmate

Ans. (B) Bholi's cow

6. What did Bishamber demand as dowry?

- (A) two thousand rupees
- (B) five thousand rupees
- (C) ten thousand rupees
- (D) twenty thousand rupees

Ans. (B) five thousand rupees

7. Who is the real artist in the story 'Bholi'?

- (A) the teacher
- (B) Ramlal
- (C) Bholi
- (D) Bishamber Nath

Ans. (A) the teacher

Read the extracts given below carefully and answer the questions that follow:

1. Ramlal was overjoyed to see such pomp and splendour. He had never dreamt that his fourth daughter would have such a grand wedding. Bholi's elder sisters who had come for the occasion were envious of her luck.

- (a) Whose marriage is referred to here?
- (b) What had Ramlal never expected?
- (c) Why were Bholi's elder sisters envious of her luck?
- (d) How was the marriage procession of Bholi?

Ans. (a) Bholi's marriage is referred to here.

(b) Ramlal had never expected such pomp, splendour and a grand wedding.

(c) Her elder sisters were envious of her grand wedding.

(d) The marriage procession came with great pomp and show. Everyone expected marriage to be grand.

2. Bishamber raised the garland to place it around the bride's neck; but before he could do so, Bholi's hand struck out like a streak of lightning and the garland was flung into the fire. She got up and threw away the veil.

- (a) What did Bholi do?
- (b) Why did she do it?
- (c) Why did Bholi at first agree to an unequal match?
- (d) Later, she rejected the marriage. What does this tell us about her?

Answers:(a) Bholi suddenly stood up and threw away the garland into the fire.

- (b) Because she did not agree to the condition of Bishamber of five thousand rupees.
- (c) This was because; she never wanted to add to the worries of her parents by her refusal.
- (d) Her behaviour reflected that she was no longer a timid, tame, dumb-driven cow but a bold, confident and self-respecting girl.

3. Left alone, the poor girl looked about her with fear-laden. There were several rooms, and in each room girls like her squatted-on mats, reading from books or writing on slates.

- (a) Which place is described here?
- (b) Who is the 'poor girl'?
- (c) Why does the girl look around with fear-laden eyes?
- (d) What was Bholi's reaction when her father asked her to come with him to school?

Ans. (a) The school to which Bholi is taken to by her father is described here.

- (b) Bholi is the 'poor girl'.
- (c) She looked so because it was the first time she was being taken to a place away from home.
- (d) She was afraid. She had no idea of a school.

4. For the sake of this kind woman, however, she decided to make an effort. She had such a soothing voice; she would not laugh at her.

- (a) Who was the kind woman?
- (b) What idea do you form about this woman?
- (c) Was her approach effective?
- (d) Why do you think Bholi's teacher played an important role in changing her life?

Ans. (a) The teacher of Bholi.

- (b) The teacher spoke in a soft voice knowing that Bholi was in fear. She wanted to give confidence to stammering Bholi.
- (c) Yes, it proved to be very effective for Bholi.
- (d) Bholi's teacher made her confident, daring and self-respecting person who had the courage to refuse to marry a lame and greedy old man.

5. 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."

- (a) Why didn't Bholi dare to come out of her classroom?
- (b) How many children did Ramlal have?
- (c) Why was Bholi sobbing?
- (d) Why do you think she finds her teacher different from the people at home?

Ans. (a) Bholi did not dare to come out of her classroom because it was her first day in school. Also, she had a complex that other girls would laugh at her for stammering.

(b) Seven.

(c) She had an inferiority complex as other girls were laughing at her for stammering.

(d) The soft, sweet, soothing voice, sympathetic and encouraging behaviour of her teacher made her much different from the people at home.

6. “What’s the matter with you, you fool?” shouted Ramlal. “I am only taking you to school.” Then he told his wife, “Let her wear some decent clothes today, or else what will the teacher and the other school girls think of us when they see her?”

(a) Who is speaking and to whom?

(b) What did he want his wife to do?

(c) Why was Bholi scared to go to school?

(d) What made her feel that she was going to a better place than her home?

Ans. (a) Ramlal is speaking to Bholi.

(1) He wanted his wife to get Bholi ready for the school.

(c) Bholi did not know what a school was like. Actually, she had no idea of a school.

(d) When, she was given a bath, decent clothes to wear, her hair was oiled and combed, she thought so.

SUMMARY-

Bholi is a work by Khwaja Ahmad Abbas (K.A. Abbas). He was an Indian film director, screenwriter, novelist and journalist. He did his works in Hindi, Urdu and English languages. This story is about a girl, Bholi, who had fallen off a cot in the head. Thus, some part of her brain was damaged and she remained a backward child. She stammered and also had pock-marks on the face. Everyone made fun of her. However, her life changed when she started going to school. A kind-hearted teacher encouraged her and she overcame her problem of stammering. Moreover, when she was asked to marry in exchange for dowry, she refused. She said that she would not marry a greedy person. On the contrary, she will serve her parents in their old age and teach in the same school where she learnt so many good things.

DETAILED SUMMARY

This story is about a girl, Bholi, whose real name was Sulekha. She suffered from some brain-damage and thus used to stammer. Moreover, she suffered from the disease of small-pox which left pock-marks on her face. This made her look ugly. Thus, due to her dullness and ugly face, people made fun of her. Also, people called her Bholi as she remained a backward child. Ramlal had seven children- three sons and four daughters. Bholi was the youngest of all daughters. All others were healthy and strong except Bholi. They would also worry about her marriage. One day, Tehsildar Sahib came to perform the opening ceremony of a primary school opened in the village. He asked Ramlal to send her daughter to school. However, Bholi’s mother was not in support of sending her school. Yet, she agreed.

At first, Bholi was frightened to hear about school. However, when she was properly cared for, given good clothes and other things, she began to believe that she was being taken to a better place than her home. She was happy to see girls of her age. She wanted to make one of them her friends. However, when the teacher asked her name, she stammered and all the girls laughed. This discouraged her badly. She started crying. But the teacher was a kind-hearted woman. She encouraged her to speak. Moreover,

she told her that she could overcome her stammering completely if she came to school daily. This aroused a sign of hope and new life in Bholi.

Years passed, the village became a small town. Moreover, the little primary school turned into a high school. Other improvements have also taken place. A marriage proposal came for Bholi. It was from a lame old man whose children were also grown up. However, Ramlal and his wife agreed as he was well-settled. Bholi's sisters were envious to see the pomp and splendour at their sister's wedding. However, when the groom was about to garland the bride, he saw pock marks on Bholi's face. Bishamber refused to marry such an ugly girl without a dowry. Ramlal managed the amount.

However, Bholi refused to marry such a greedy person. People were startled to see her speaking without stammering. The groom returned back. Bholi told her father that she would serve him and mother in their old age. Furthermore, she will teach in the same school from where she learnt so many good things. We learnt from the story that proper support and emotional security can lead to a child's development.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS-

Question 1.

“Put the fear out of your heart and you will be able to speak like anyone else.” These words of encouragement from the teacher highlight that change of social attitude and encouragement can help a child like Bholi to become confident and face the world bravely. With reference to the story ‘Bholi’ write how the social attitude towards Bholi made her an introvert. What should be done to help such children to face the world bravely?

Bholi was neglected by her parents on account of her looks and lack of intelligence. She used to stammer so the other children made fun of her and mimicked her. As a result, she talked very little. It was a daunting task for the teacher to encourage Bholi. The teacher talked to her affectionately and friendly. She assured her if she put the fear out of her heart and she would be able to speak like anyone else. Through the efforts of years Bholi became a transferred personality. She refused to marry a greedy man who was trying to exploit her father due to her looks. Such children should be constantly encouraged by the parents, teachers and even by the other relations. They must be taught to fight back their handicaps rather to accept it as facts.

Question 2.

What social attitudes are presented in the story, ‘Bholi’? How does Bholi's teacher help her overcome these barriers?

Bholi was neglected by her parents on account of her looks and lack of intelligence. She was sent to school as her mother thought her to be a burden and let the teachers at school worry about her. Ironically, the teachers transformed her life completely. God created this world but teachers create human beings.

Bholi did not know what exactly a school was and what happened there, in the class when her teacher asked her name, she stammered and began to cry. She kept her head down throughout the class. The teacher was very encouraging and friendly to her and this made her gain confidence to speak. She started seeing a ray of hope for a new life. After years of gaining education and with the help of her teacher, Bholi turned into a confident girl. She no longer stammered and could speak

properly. She even had the courage to refuse marrying the lame old man because he was greedy and asked money from her father to marry her. Education is always a great asset in the life of a woman.

3. How did Bholi, an educated girl free the challenge posed by Bishamber's greed?

OR

School education turned Bholi from a dumb cow into a bold girl. How did she save her father from a huge expense and become his support in his old age?

Ironically, Bholi was sent to school as her mother believed she was a burden and let the teachers at the school worry for her. The teacher showed affection and encouraged her to shed her fear. She was assured by her teacher that she would speak like others one day.

Years of hard work transformed Bholi into a bold and confident young woman. Bishamber refused to marry Bholi due to her appearance and demanded five thousand rupees. Bholi saw how her father was humiliated for no reason. She refused to marry a greedy, mean and contemptible coward. She assured her father that she would serve him and her mother in their old age. She had a mission in her life; she would spread the light of education in her village.

4. "Dowry is a negation of the girl's dignity". Explain this statement in the light of the story of 'Bholi'.

Initially Bishamber did not demand dowry to get married to Bholi. He was a widower, having children and of the age of Ramlal. But during the marriage ceremony he happened to see the face of Bholi. He bargains if he was given five thousand rupees he will marry the girl. Bholi's father Ramlal placed his turban at his feet but he refused. A girl is considered a liability in her own natal home due to prevalence of the custom of dowry practice. Some parents are unwilling to give higher education to their daughter as they have to search for 'highly educated boy for marriages and a better educated boy will demand more dowry which creates unnecessary problem for parents.

Besides, the boy who receives huge amount of dowry may think of himself as more dignified as having a higher status, greater prestige and more respectful than the girl. Subsequently the girl develops inferiority complex. Fortunately, Bholi refuses to marry greedy Bishamber and decides to serve her parents instead in their old age. '

5. How did the teacher encourage Bholi on her first day in school?

OR

On the basis of your understanding of the story, describe the role played by the teacher in the life of Bholi.

Bholi was neglected by her parents on account of her looks and lack of intelligence. She was sent to school as her mother thought her to be a burden the teacher in the school asked her to tell her name. She stammered -and began to cry. The teacher showed her affection and encouraged her in a friendly manner to put aside her fear. Bholi somehow told her name. The teacher assured her that she would be able to speak like everyone else one day. Bholi was surprised. The teacher asked her to come to school regularly. Love and encouragement shown by the teacher brought out drastic changes in Bholi's personality. Within a few years she became so confident that she refused to marry a greedy man.

Question 6.

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

Bholi was sent to school as her mother thought her to be a burden. She was neglected by her parents as she was not beautiful and lacked intelligence. The teacher in the school asked her to tell her name. She stammered and began to cry. The teacher showed her affection and encouraged her in a friendly manner to put aside her fear. Bholi somehow told her name. Bholi was surprised. The teacher asked her to come to school regularly. Love and encouragement shown by the teacher brought out drastic changes in Bholi’s personality. Within a few years she became so confident that she refused to marry a greedy man.

Question 7.

No one is always foolish. Time and circumstances give us intelligence and change out. personality. Explain with reference to ‘Bholi’.

Yes, it is quite right that no one is always foolish. Time decides everything. Our maturity and knowledge depend on our experience. Experience is always based on circumstances. Time and experiences teach us different things and make life perfect. Without experience or practical knowledge all bookish knowledge is in vain. It is never used. There are many such examples in our real life that prove this statement correct.

Question 8.

Why did Bholi at first agree to an unequal match? Why did she later reject the marriage? What does this tell us about her?

This is a normal practice in India that girls seldom oppose their parent’s choice for a groom. The upbringing of daughters does a kind of mental conditioning which doesn’t give them enough courage to rebel against their parent’s wish. Bholi more or less followed the tradition of being an ideal Indian girl, and agreed to an unequal match because her mother felt she was lucky to get a well-to-do groom who owned a big shop, had a house of his own and had several thousands in the bank. Moreover, he was not asking for any dowry.

Bholi also heard her mother saying that he did not know about her pox-marks and her lack of sense. If the proposal was not accepted, she might remain unmarried all her life. Later on, when the groom bared his greed to everyone, it repulsed Bholi and she opposed the marriage. Unlike her sisters, Bholi is educated and has a mind of her own. She is as independent as any other modern girl of a big city.

On seeing her father pleading and getting humiliated, she decided not to marry him. This tells us that she loves and respects her parents, has self-respect and knows what is right or wrong and is able to take a wise decision.

Question 9.

Bholi’s real name is Sulekha. We are told this right at the beginning. But only in the last but one paragraph of the story is Bholi called Sulekha again. Why do you think she is called Sulekha at that point in the story?

The word Bholi means a simpleton. Throughout the story she had been a simpleton, hardly expressing her opinion in any matter. The word Sulekha means the person with beautiful sense of

letters. In this story this word has a larger meaning. It depicts being a literate, intelligent and mature individual. After her education Bholi has really changed to Sulekha and her assertion during marriage is her announcement to the world that she is no more a Bholi but Sulekha.

Question 10.

Bholi's teacher helped her overcome social barriers by encouraging and motivating her. How do you think you can contribute towards changing the social attitudes illustrated in this story?

Bholi's teacher helped her overcome social barriers by motivating and encouraging her. The same act can be performed by the young generation too. If, we the new generation, identify the social evils, like corruption, dowry, child marriage, unemployment, poverty, gender discrimination and decide to fight against them; it will revolutionize the system. Thus, we can remove all the above-mentioned evils from the society.