



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

**Ans.** 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?**

**Ans.** 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?**

**Ans.** 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?**

**Ans.** 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 ask her to go to school for the first time?**

- (A) she was not given new clothes
- (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 behaviours 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 him much different from the people he had 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.

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, a woman slipped the veil from the bride's face. Bisambar 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 QUESTION

#### **Question 1.**

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

**Answer:**

A girl is an individual in her own right. Equal opportunities in life can help her become independent and strong. She is not a burdensome object to be given away with money as compensation. Thus dowry negates the girl's dignity and self-respect.

The story '**Bholi**' shows this in a dramatic manner. Bholi is thought to be ugly and dumb by her parents. So, they are willing to pay dowry to an old man with a limp. So that he marries her. Bholi, on the other hand, refuses to marry that man. She is educated; assertive and capable of taking care of herself. She dedicates her life to service of her parents and teaching at school.

#### **Question 2.**

Bholi chose a dignified life of service rather than surrendering herself to a greedy old man for the rest of her life. Education provides the required stimulus to overcome one's personal barriers.

Explain the role of education in shaping the life of a child with respect to the lesson '**Bholi**'.

**Answer:**

Education is the answer to all social ills. Illiteracy and ignorance bring nothing but poverty, suffering and misery. Bholi lacks confidence initially because of her disabilities. She is silent, timid and weak in mind. Her ugliness and her stammer do not let her progress. She is afraid to speak as others make fun of her.

School changes her life completely. It opens a new world of hope for her. Her teacher treats her with love and kindness. Her affection and support help Bholi to have faith in herself. She studies and grows into a confident young woman. She knows her rights and she asserts them as well. She refuses to marry a man who demands dowry. Thus, being educated changes the life of Bholi.

#### **Question 3.**

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

**Answer:**

Nature does not discriminate, but society does. From time immemorial the world has discriminated against the girl child. The chapter, '**Bholi**' throws up many such instances. Randal's sons go to school and college. His daughters are not educated but married off. Her mother does not think it necessary to take Bholi's consent for her marriage. The groom is old and lame. Still he demands dowry. Her father is ready to pay him also. It is the girl herself who raises her voice against this

marriage. She is criticised and humiliated for standing up for her dignity. But she is firm and decides the course of her life.

**Question 4.**

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

**Answer:**

Society does not tolerate difference very easily. Bholi is not like others. She is slow for her age. She stammers when she speaks. Small pox leaves her all covered with pock-marks. As a result, she has to suffer a lot.

Her parents do not even bathe her. She is ignored and neglected. They take her only as a burden. People laugh at her. Children imitate her when she speaks. So, she remains silent most of the time. She has no confidence or self-esteem.

Society must realise that it must accept those who are "different". They must be treated with the same love and respect as others.

**Although Bholi never got the deserved love, care and acceptance from her family, she is ready to reciprocate like all daughters in Indian society. Discuss the character of Bholi in the light of the above-mentioned**

**Answer:** Bholi was the fourth daughter of Ramlal. She got her brain damaged when she was only ten months old. At the age of two, she had an attack of smallpox which left permanent pockmarks on her body. She stammered while speaking. Thus she was a neglected child in her family. Nobody took care of her. Nobody loved her. Nobody had any expectations from her. Her parents called her a dumb cow and treated her so. The old dresses of her sister were passed on to her. No one cared to mend or wash her clothes.

New clothes had never been made for Bholi. No one oiled her hairs or tried to teach her anything. Luckily she was sent to school and her teacher changed her life entirely. Now she was a learned girl. When her parents decided to marry her with Bishamber a fifty years old lame, greedy person, she did not speak a word and agreed to it silently for the sake of her parents. She did not even protest. Later on, when Bishamber insulted her parents and demanded 5000 rupees, she refused to marry him and declared that she will never marry anyone and will always serve her parents in their old age. Thus in spite of being a neglected child, Bholi acted like all daughters in Indian societies.

**2. Bholi challenged the dowry seeker. She used to be a meek girl. What changed her attitude towards life?**

**Answer:** Bholi used to be a meek girl. She had pockmarks on her body. Her brain got damaged when she was just ten months. She was also a slow learner. She could not speak until she was five. Later on, she started stammering while speaking.

She was sent to school just for formality. Her parents were not serious about her studies. But her teacher changed her life. She encouraged her to speak properly and to learn more and more in school.

Then she knew what is good or what is bad. Now she could differentiate between right and wrong. Education totally changed her personality. Even then she behaved like an obedient girl and agreed to marry Bishamber— fifty years old. same person. But she could not stand his demand of dowry. She

refused to fulfill Bishamber's demand of five thousand rupees and denied to marry him. Thus education changed her attitude towards her life.

Character sketch of Bholi in Brief-

Bholi was a simple, but sensitive girl. Unfortunately, she suffered from a head injury and small pox. It made her suffer all through her life. She couldn't speak till she was five. She stammered when she started speaking. The attack of smallpox had permanently disfigured her whole body leaving black pock marks. She was a hard working and dedicated learner. With her teacher's support, she grew to be confident, bold and independent. Seeing her teacher's faith in her abilities, she made efforts to improve herself. Her confident and bold attitude to raise her voice against a social evil proved that she was educated in true sense of terms.

**Give a character sketch of Bishamber Nath.**

**Ans.** Bishamber Nath was a well-to-do grocer. He had a big shop. He had a house of his own and thousands of rupees in the bank. He was a widower. He had children from his first wife. They were quite grown up now. Bishamber was an unequal match for Bholi. He was almost of the age of her father. He limped too. But Bholi's parents thought him a good match for Bholi. He ignored his age and limping and accepted Bishamber's proposal of marriage. Of course, Bholi was not even consulted. Bishamber Nath wanted to dazzle Bholi's parents with his wealth. He came with a large party of friends and relatives for the wedding. A brass band moved ahead playing a popular filmy tune. Ramlal was overjoyed to see this pomp and grandeur. Bishamber Nath showed his true colour when he found that the bride had pockmarks on her face. He shamelessly demanded five thousand rupees as dowry to marry such a girl. Ramlal put even his turban at his feet. Bishamber didn't budge and Ramlal put a bundle of notes at his feet.

Bishamber was rightly punished and humiliated in the end. The 'dumb cow' got her tongue now. She threw away the wedding garland into the fire. She refused to marry such a mean, greedy and worthless man. Bholi did the right thing by rejecting such a person.