



ENGLISH

BOOKS - FULL MARKS ENGLISH (HINGLISH)

THE SERMON AT BENARES

Before You Read

1. What is a sermon? Is it different from a lecture or a talk? Can this word also be used in

a negative way or as a joke (as in "my mother's sermon about getting my work done on time...)?



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2. Find out the meanings of the words and phrases given in the following.

afflicted with, be composed, desolation, lamentation, procure, be subject to



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3. Have you heard of the Sermon on the Mount? Who delivered it? Who do you think delivered a sermon at Benares?



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Passages For Comprehension Passage 1

1. Gautama Buddha (563 B.C.-483 B.C.) began life as a prince named Siddhartha Gautama, in northern India. At twelve, he was sent away for schooling in the Hindu sacred scriptures and

four years later he returned home to marry a princess. They had a son and lived for ten years as befitted royalty. At about the age of twenty-five, the Prince, heretofore shielded from the sufferings of the world, while out hunting chanced upon a sick man, then an aged man, then a funeral procession, and finally a monk begging for alms.

Describe the early life of Buddha.



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Why did they shield Buddha from the sufferings of the world?



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Passages For Comprehension Passage 2

1. These sights so moved him that he at once went out into the world to seek enlightenment concerning the sorrows he had witnessed. He wandered for seven years and finally sat down under a peepal tree, where he

vowed to stay until enlightenment came. Enlightened after seven days, he renamed the tree the Bodhi Tree (Tree of Wisdom) and began to teach and to share his new understandings. At that point he became known as the Buddha (the Awakened or the Enlightened). The Buddha preached his first sermon at the city of Benares, most holy of the dipping places on the River Ganges, that sermon has been preserved and is given here. It reflects the Buddha's wisdom about one inscrutable kind of suffering.

What sights moved Gautama?



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How and where did Gautama get enlightenment?



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1. Kisa Gotami had an only son, and he died. In her grief she carried the dead child to all her neighbours. asking them for medicine, and the people said, "She has lost her senses. The boy is dead."

Why was Kisa Gotami in deep grief?



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2. Kisa Gotami had an only son, and he died. In her grief she carried the dead child to all her

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Why did the people say that she had lost her senses?



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Passages For Comprehension Passage 4

1. Poor Kisa Gotami now went from house to house, and the people pitied her and said,

"Here is mustard seed, take it!" But when she asked, "Did a son or daughter, a father or mother, die in your family?" they answered her, "Alas! the living are few, but the dead are many. "Do not remind us of our deepest grief." And there was no house but some beloved one had died in it.

Did Kisa Gotami receive a handful of mustard seeds?



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2. Poor Kisa Gotami now went from house to house, and the people pitied her and said, "Here is mustard seed, take it!" But when she asked, "Did a son or daughter, a father or mother, die in your family?" they answered her, "Alas! the living are few, but the dead are many. "Do not remind us of our deepest grief." And there was no house but some beloved one had died in it.

What did people say to her?



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Passages For Comprehension Passage 5

1. Kisa Gotami became weary and hopeless, and sat down at the wayside watching the lights of the city, as they flickered up and were extinguished again. At last the darkness of the night reigned everywhere. And she considered the fate of men, that their lives flicker up and are extinguished again. And she thought to herself, "How selfish am I in my grief! Death is common to all, yet in this valley of desolation there is a path that leads him to immortality

who has surrendered all selfishness."

What did Kisa Gotami think when she saw the lights of the city flickering up and extinguishing again.



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Why did she feel that she was selfish in her grief?



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Passages For Comprehension Passage 6

1. The Buddha said, "The life of mortals in this world is troubled and brief and combined with pain. For there is not any means by which those that have been born can avoid dying, after reaching old age there is death, of such a nature are living beings. As ripe fruits are early in danger of falling, so mortals when born are always in danger of death. As all earthen vessels made by the potter end in being broken, so is the life of mortals. Both young and adult, both those who are fools and those who are wise, all fall into the power of death,

all are subject to death.

What did the Buddha say about the life of mortals in this world?



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How does the Buddha compare the mortals to ripe fruits and earthen vessels?



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1. "Not from weeping nor from grieving will anyone obtain peace of mind, on the contrary, his pain will be the greater and his body will suffer. He will make himself sick and pale, yet the dead are not saved by his lamentation. He who seeks peace should draw out the arrow of lamentation, and complaint, and grief. He who has drawn out the arrow and has become composed will obtain peace of mind, he who has overcome all sorrow will become free from

sorrow, and be blessed. "

Will weeping and grieving give peace of mind ?



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2. "Not from weeping nor from grieving will anyone obtain peace of mind, on the contrary, his pain will be the greater and his body will suffer. He will make himself sick and pale, yet the dead are not saved by his lamentation. He who seeks peace should draw out the arrow of lamentation, and complaint, and grief. He who

has drawn out the arrow and has become composed will obtain peace of mind, he who has overcome all sorrow will become free from sorrow, and be blessed. "

Who will become free from all sorrow and be blessed ?



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**Ncert Textbook Questions Solved Thinking About
The Text**

1. When her son dies, Kisa Gotami goes from house to house. What does she ask for? Does she get it? Why not?



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2. Kisa Gotami again goes from house to house after she speaks with the Buddha. What does she ask for, the second time around? Does she get it? Why not?



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3. What does Kisa Gotami understand the second time that she failed to understand the first time? Was this what the Buddha wanted her to understand?



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4. Why do you think Kisa Gotami understood this only the second time? In what way did the Buddha change her understanding?



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5. How do you usually understand the idea of 'Selfishness'? Do you agree with Kisa Gotami that she was being 'selfish in her grief?



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Ncert Textbook Questions Solved Thinking About Language

1. This text is written in an old-fashioned style, for it reports an incident more than two millennia old. Look for the following words and phrases in the text, and try to rephrase them in more current language, based on how you understand them.

- give thee medicine for thy child
- Pray tell me
- Kisa repaired to the Buddha
- there was no house but someone had died in it

- kinsmen
- Mark!



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2. You know that we can combine sentences using words like and, or, but, yet and then. But sometimes no such word seems appropriate. In such a case we can use a semicolon (;) or a dash (—) to combine two clauses.

She has no interest in music, I doubt she will become a singer like her mother. The second

clause here gives speaker's opinion on the first clause.

Here is a sentence from the text that uses semicolons to combine clauses. Break up the sentence into three simple sentences. Can you then say which has a better rhythm when you read it, the single sentence using semicolons, or the three simple sentences?

For there is not any means by which those who have been born can avoid dying, after reaching old age there is death, of such a nature are living beings.

Ncert Textbook Questions Solved Speaking

1. The Buddha's sermon is over 2500 years old. Given below are two recent texts on the topic of grief. Read the texts, comparing them with each other and with the Buddha's sermon.

Do you think the Buddha's ideas and way of teaching continue to hold meaning for us? Or have we found better ways to deal with grief? Discuss this in groups or in class.

I. A Guide to Coping with the Death of a Loved One

Martha is having difficulty sleeping lately and no longer enjoys doing things with her friends. Martha lost her husband of 26 years to cancer a month ago.

Anya, age 17, doesn't feel like eating and spends the days in her room crying. Her grandmother recently died.

Both of these individuals are experiencing grief. Grief is an emotion natural to all types of loss or significant change.

Feelings of Grief:

Although grief is unique and personal, a broad range of feelings and behaviours are commonly experienced after the death of a loved one.

Sadness: This is the most common, and it is not necessarily manifested by crying.

- **Anger:** This is one of the most confusing feelings for a survivor. There may be frustration at not being able to prevent the death, and a sense of not being able to exist without the loved one.

- **Guilt and Self-reproach:** People may believe that they were not kind enough or caring

enough to the person who died, or that the person should have seen the doctor sooner.

- Anxiety: An individual may fear that she/he won't be able to care for herself/ himself.

- Loneliness: There are reminders throughout the day that a partner, family member or friend is gone. For example, meals are no longer prepared the same way, phone calls to share a special moment don't happen.

- Fatigue: There is an overall sense of feeling tired.

- Disbelief. This occurs particularly if it was a sudden death.

Helping Others Who Are Experiencing Grief:

When a friend, loved one, or co-worker is experiencing grief-how can we help? It helps to understand that grief is expressed through a variety of behaviours.

Reach out to others in their grief, but understand that some may not want to accept help and will not share their grief. Others will want to talk about their thoughts and feelings or reminisce.

Be patient and let the grieving person know that you care and are there to support him or her.

II. Good Grief (AMITAI ETZIONI)

Soon after my wife died—her car slid off an icy road in 1985—a school psychologist warned me that my children and I were not mourning in the right way. We felt angry, the proper first stage, he said, is denial.

In late August this year, my 38-year-old son, Michael, died suddenly in his sleep, leaving behind a 2-year-old son and a wife expecting their next child.

=There is no set form for grief, and no 'right' way to express it. There seems to be an expectation that, after a great loss, we will

progress systematically through the wellknown stages of grief. It is wrong, we are told, to jump to anger — or to wallow too long in this stage before moving towards acceptance.

But I was, and am, angry. To make parents bury their children is wrong, to have both my wife and son taken from me, for forever and a day, is cruel beyond words. A relative from Jerusalem, who is a psychiatrist, brought some solace by citing the maxim: "We are not to ask why, but what." The "what is that which survivors in grief are bound to do for one

another. Following that advice, my family, close friends and I keep busy, calling each other and giving long answers to simple questions like, "How did your day go today?" We try to avoid thinking about either the immediate past or the bereft future. We take turns playing with Max, Michael's two-year-old son. Friends spend nights with the young widow, and will be among those holding her hand when the baby is born.

Focusing on what we do for one another is the only consolation we can find.



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Ncert Textbook Questions Solved Writing

1. Write a page (about three paragraphs) on one of the following topics. You can think about the ideas in the text that are relevant to these topics, and add your own ideas and experiences to them.

1. Teaching someone to understand a new or difficult idea
2. Helping each other to get over difficult

times

3. Thinking about oneself as unique, or as one among billions of others.



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Additional Questions Solved Short Answer Type Questions

1. Describe the early life of Gautama Buddha.



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2. What were the sights that moved and shocked Gautama?



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3. How did Siddhartha Gautama get enlightenment? Why did he name the fig tree as the Bodhi tree?



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4. What did Kisa Gotami do when her only son died? What did her neighbours think about her?



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5. How did Kisa Gotami go to the Buddha?
What did Buddha ask Gotami to do?



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6. Did Kisa Gotami get a handful of mustard seeds as directed by the Buddha?



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7. Why did Kisa Gotami say, 'How selfish am I in my grief!' What did she realise about the fate of mankind?



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8. What did Buddha say about the mortals of the world?



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9. Can grieving and lamentation avoid death and decay in this world? What did the Buddha say in this regard?



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10. What did the Buddha want Kisa Gotami to understand?

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11. How did Kisa Gotami realise that life and death is a normal process?

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12. Describe the main message that the lesson 'The sermon at Benares' gives to the readers.



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Additional Questions Solved Long Answer Type Questions

1. Describe the journey of Siddhartha Gautama becoming the Buddha.



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2. Why did Kisa Gotami go to every neighbour.

Why did she say, 'How selfish I am in my grief?'



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3. What did the Buddha ask Kisa Gotami to do?

Why couldn't Kisa Gotami succeed in getting a handful of mustard seeds from any family?



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4. What does the Buddha say about the life of mortals in this world? How can one obtain the peace of the mind?



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