

Chapter- 3

Deep Water

Sub – Concepts of the Chapter

- Overcoming Fear with courage, hard work, determination, will power and perseverance
- Feasibility of triumph over fear
- Realizing the true value of life by Conquering fear
- Optimism as an antidote to negativity

Introduction to the topic and the details of the writer William Douglas

- Was a Bachelor of Arts in English & Economics
- An American Writer
- A leading Advocate of Individual Rights.
- An Advisor and friend to President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
- This work is an excerpt taken from 'Of Men and Mountains'.
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INTRODUCTION

The chapter provides ideas on USA, California & YMCA organization of the Christian community; Contextual linkage of the ideas to the young boy William Douglas who nearly drowned in a swimming pool, got highly fearful of water and how he finally overcame it. The autobiographical part of the selection supports the discussion of fear in the first-person narration of personal experience and account of the steps taken to overcome it makes the essay quite interesting. The experience of fear and death; and its conquest made him live intensely. Conquering fear made him realize the true value of life and helped him to enjoy every moment of his living.

Lesson initiation with comprehensive explanations–

- William O. Douglas recalls a misadventure of childhood.
- The author had developed an aversion for water when he was three or four years old when he was taken by his father to the beach in California.

- Unpleasant memories were revived in his mind.
- The waves knocked him down and swept over him making him dreadful of water subsequently.
- At the age of ten or eleven, he decided to learn to swim with water wings at the Y.M.C.A pool since it was safe at the shallow end.
- A misadventure: While sitting alone and waiting for others to come to the Y.M.C.A pool, a big bruiser boy came and threw Douglas into the deep end of the pool.
- Douglas swallowed water and went straight down the bottom of the pool.
- While going down he planned to make a big jump upwards but could not come up; tried to shout but could not.
- It seemed a long way down. Those nine feet were more like ninety, and before he touched bottom his lungs were ready to burst.

Lesson continuation with comprehensive explanations – (Pages: 26-28)

- As he went down the pool second time, he tried to jump upwards but it was a waste of energy.
- Terror held him deeper and deeper.
- During the third trial, he sucked water instead of air.
- The light was going out and there was no panic.
- So he ceased all efforts and he became unconscious.
- He crossed to oblivion.
- When revived he found himself vomiting beside the pool.
- He was in grip of fear of water and it deprived him of the joys of canoeing, boating, swimming, and fishing.
- Hired an instructor to learn swimming.
- The instructor taught him swimming piece by piece.

Lesson continuation with comprehensive explanations –(Pages: 29)

- He went to different lakes to swim and found tiny vestiges of fear still gripping him.
- He challenged fear and swam.
- Swimming up and down the Warm Lake he finally overcame his fear of water.
- He realized that 'in death there is peace and there is terror only in fear of death'.
- The experience of fear and death; and its conquest made him live intensely.

- Conquering fear made him realize the true value of life and helped him enjoy every moment of his living.
- Finally, he learned to live life to the full.

QUESTIONS FOR COMPREHENSION

- 1) What is the 'Misadventure' that William Douglas speaks about?
- 2) How did this experience affect him?
- 3) When Douglas realized that he was sinking, how did he plan to save himself?
- 4) Which factors led Douglas to decide in favour of the Y.M.C.A. pool?
- 5) "I had an aversion to the water when I was in it?" says Douglas. When did he start having this aversion and how?
- 6) When did Douglas decide to learn swimming? What options were available to him to swim in? Which one did he choose and why?
- 7) In what connection does Douglas mention "a bruiser of a boy?"
- 8) How did his experience at the YMCA swimming pool affect Douglas' life?
- 9) Why was Douglas determined to get over his fear of water?
- 10) How did the instructor "build a swimmer" out of Douglas?
- 11) Mention two long term consequences of the drowning incident on Douglas.
- 12) Why did Douglas go to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire?
- 13) 'All we have to fear is fear itself'. When did Douglas learn this lesson?
- 14) How did the instructor make Douglas a good swimmer?
- 15) How did Douglas overcome his fear of water?
- 16) Which other exercise did the Instructor prescribe for Douglas to make him shed the panic caused by water?
- 17) Why did Douglas go to Lake Wentworth in New Hampshire? How did he make his Does terror flee?