

**A LETTER TO GOD ----- BY G.L. Fuentes**

**ORAL COMPREHENSION – TEXTBOOK PG. NO. 5**

Q.1. What did Lencho hope for?

Ans. Lencho hoped for a good shower of rain as it was the only thing that his field of ripe corn needed.

Q.2. Why did Lencho say the raindrops were the new coins?

Ans. Lencho's crops were ready for harvest. As a good rain promises a better harvest resulting in good money (more prosperity), so Lencho compared the raindrops to new coins.

Q.3. How did the rain change? What happened to Lencho's fields?

Ans. The rain was pouring down. But, suddenly a strong wind began to blow and very large hailstones began to fall along with the rain. All the crop in Lencho's fields was completely destroyed.

Q.4. What were Lencho's feelings when the hail stopped? (BOARD 2012)

Ans. Lencho was filled with utter sadness when the hailstorm stopped. He was troubled to see the corn which was totally destroyed. Lencho's hope changed to despair as he and his family would face starvation that year.

**TEXTBOOK PAGE NO. 6**

q.1 Who or what did Lencho have faith in? What did he do?

Ans. Lencho had a deep faith in God. He believed that God's eyes see everything even what is deep in one's conscience. He wrote a letter to God asking for 100 pesos to sow his field again and to help his family survive until the crop comes.

Q.2. Who read the letter?

Ans. The postmaster read the letter.

Q.3 What did the postmaster do then? (Board 2012. 2014)

Ans. The postmaster first laughed. But then he turned serious. He was deeply moved by Lencho's faith in God . He collected money from the post office employees , he himself contributed a part of his salary and sent the money to Lencho in God's name to keep his faith alive.

TEXTBOOK PAGE NO. 7

Q.1. Was Lencho surprised to find a letter for him with money in it?

Ans. No, Lencho was not surprised as he had confidence and firm belief in God and so expected that reply from God.

Q.2 What made him angry? ( Board 2016)

Ans. He became angry on counting the amount in the envelope. He found only seventy pesos whereas he had asked for hundred pesos. He was confident that God could neither make a mistake nor deny his wish. So, he thought that the post office employees had cheated him and must have taken the remaining thirty pesos.

THINKING ABOUT THE TEXT – PAGE NUMBER 7

Question 1: Who does Lencho have complete faith in? Which sentences in the story tell you this?

**Answer:** Lencho had complete and unshaken faith in God. He is sure that God will prevent him and his family from starvation and so writes a letter to God.

The following sentences explain Lencho's faith in the God, ---

- a) "But in the hearts of all who lived in that solitary house in the middle of the valley, there was a single hope: help from God.
- b) "Don't be so upset, even though this seems like a total loss. Remember, no one dies of hunger."
- c) All through the night, Lencho thought only of one hope, the help of God, whose eyes, as he had been instructed , see everything, even what is deep in one's conscience.
- d) "God", he wrote , " If you don't help me, my family and I will go hungry this year."

Question 2: Why does the postmaster send money to Lencho? Why does he sign the letter 'God'?

**Answer:** The Postmaster was moved by Lencho's complete faith in God. So, he decided to send money to Lencho in order to keep Lencho's faith in God alive. Moreover, the postmaster did not want to shake Lencho's faith in God. So, he signed the letter 'God'. It was a good ploy to convey a message that God had himself written the letter and sent the money to help him .

Question 3: Did Lencho try to find out who had sent the money to him? Why/Why not?

**Answer:** As Lencho had immense faith in God. and never doubted it, so he did not try to find out the actual sender of money. He showed no surprise on receiving the money as he expected a definite help from God.

Question 4 : Who does Lencho think has taken the rest of the money? What is the irony in the situation?

**Answer:** Lencho had all his doubts on the people working in the post office. He believes that the post office employees have taken the rest of his thirty pesos.

The irony of the situation is the finger pointing on those who had tried to help out Lencho. The postmaster and his employees who contributed to collect seventy pesos to help Lencho are thought to be cheats by him and suspects them of stealing his money.

Question 5: Are there people like Lencho in the real world? What kind of a person would you say he is? You may select appropriate words from the following list to answer the question.

Greedy, naïve, stupid, ungrateful, selfish, comical, unquestioning

**Answer:** In the real world it is very rare to find people, like Lencho. Lencho seems to be naïve and unquestioning. Naïve in the sense that he doesn't even bother to think about who sent the money or if God would actually send the money. Probably his naiveté comes from his unquestioning belief in the God. ( naïve= innocent, childlike, trusting, simple)

Question 15: There are two kinds of conflict in the story: between humans and nature, and between humans themselves. How are these conflicts illustrated?

**Answer:** In the initial part of the story, the episode of rainfall turning into a hailstorm shows the conflict between man and nature. When it rains, Lencho is very happy dreaming about happy days ahead. But once the rain turns into hail he is ruining the happening of hailstorm as it destroys all his crops. The way Lencho feels sad and gloomy after the storm appropriately projects the conflict of nature and man.

In the later part of the story when Lencho blames the post office people for stealing part of the money ,it shows the conflict between humans.. The postmaster and his employees who collect money to help Lencho are ironically considered to be a bunch of crooks by Lencho. This shows that man does not have faith in fellow humans, thereby giving rise to the conflict between humans.

## Meaning of some difficult Words

1. **Crest** – Peak
2. **Dotted** – Spotted
3. **Shower** – Mild Rain
4. **Supper** – The Last meal of the day.
5. **Draped** – Covered, Wrapped
6. **Hailstone** – The frozen mass of ice.
7. **Plague** – Disease
8. **Solitary** – Lonely
9. **An Ox of a man** – Hard working man
10. **Amiable** – Friendly
11. **Correspondence** – The Exchange of letters
12. **Resolution** – Firm decision
13. **Wrinkling** – Folds of skin
14. **Affixed** – Glued
15. **Bunch of Crooks** – Group of dishonest people

Word meanings

Intimately= detailed

Resemble= have similar appearance

Frozen pearls (here)= hail stones

Solitary= lonely

Conscience= mind, inner voice, sense of right and wrong

Evident= clear

Goodwill= kindness, compassion

Obliged= compelled

## FIGURES OF SPEECH/ LITERARY DEVICES

### 1. Metaphor— comparison of one thing with another without the words ‘like’ or ‘as’. ( Refer textbook page. 11)

Huge mountains of clouds, new coins, a curtain of rain, frozen pearls, a plague of locusts, an ox of a man

### Summary

A Letter to God by E L Fuentes depicts the unshakeable faith of a farmer in God. Lencho, a farmer was expecting a rain to nourish his corn field. He was confident that his harvest was going to yield him huge profits just like it does every year. To his utmost excitement, it started raining but sooner it turned in to a hailstorm destroying his entire crop field. The corn was totally destroyed. The flowers were gone from the plants. Lencho's soul was filled with sadness. When the storm had passed, he stood in the middle of the field and said to his sons, 'A plague of locusts would have left more than this. The hail has left nothing. This year we will have no corn.' The damage posed a threat to the survival of the entire family. Their livelihood was dependent on the year's produce. Lencho became stressed and disappointed. But he had strong faith in God. Lencho spent his entire night thinking of the only option left and that was to seek the help of God. He thought of writing a letter to God conveying his grievances. Despite spending all these years working at the farm, he still knew how to write. He wrote, 'God, if you don't help me, my family and I will go hungry this year. I need a hundred pesos in order to sow my field again and to live until the crop comes.....' He wrote "To God" on the envelope, put the letter inside and went to the town to the post office. He placed the stamp on the letter and dropped the letter into the mailbox. A postman noticed Lencho's letter and showed it to the postmaster. They both felt amused, but the postmaster, fat and amiable, immediately developed a sense of seriousness. He was astounded at the amount of faith Lencho had in God and wished he had the same. So, in order not to shake the faith of the poor farmer in God, the postmaster decided to answer the letter. It was evident that to answer the letter he needed something more than goodwill. So he asked money from the employees, he himself gave part of his salary, and several friends of his were obliged to give something 'for an act of charity'. He could collect only 70 pesos. He put the money in an envelope addressed to Lencho and with a letter

containing only a single word as signature: God. When Lencho got the letter he was not at all shocked but instead he got angry on finding that the amount was less than what he had expected. He again wrote a letter to God conveying his disappointment and asked for the rest of the money. He even wrote it should not be sent through the post office as the employees of the post office are a 'bunch of crooks'. He thought that the employees must have stolen the missing amount.

II. Answer the following with reference to context:

1. With a satisfied expression he regarded the field of ripe corn with its flowers, draped in a curtain of rain. But suddenly a strong wind began to blow and along with the rain very large hailstones began to fall. These truly did resemble new silver coins. The boys, exposing themselves to the rain, ran out to collect the frozen pearls.

- (a) What happened to the rain suddenly?
- (b) 'The frozen pearls' refers to which thing in the paragraph.
- (c) Find the similar meaning-of 'contented' in the paragraph.
- (d) Find from the passage a word which means 'to take after'

Answer: (a) The rain suddenly changed into hailstones.

- (b) 'The frozen pearls' refers to hailstones.
- (c) The word is 'Satisfied'.
- (d) The word is 'Resemble'.

2. That's what they say: no one dies of hunger." All through the night, Lencho thought only of his one hope: the help of God, whose eyes, as he had been instructed, see everything, even what is deep in one's conscience. Lencho was an ox of a man, working like an animal in the fields, but still he knew how to write. [CBSE 2014]

- (a) What was Lencho's only hope?
- (b) How did Lencho work in the field?

- (c) Find the exact word of similar meaning 'moral sense' given in the passage
- (d) Explain 'an ox of a man'.

Answer: (a) Lencho's only hope was the help of God.

- (b) Lencho worked as an 'ox' in the field.
- (c) The word is 'conscience'.
- (d) It means a man working hard like an ox or animal.

3. The following Sunday, Lencho came a bit earlier than usual to ask if there was a letter for him. It was the postman himself who handed the letter to him while the postmaster, experiencing the contentment of a man who has performed a good deed, looked on from his office. Lencho showed not the slightest surprise on seeing the money; such was his confidence, but he became angry when he counted the money. God could not have made a mistake, nor could he have denied Lencho what he had requested.

- (a) Why did Lencho come earlier to the post office?
- (b) Why was Lencho angry when he counted money?
- (c) Find the word which means the opposite of permitted from the passage.
- (d) Which word in the passage gives the meaning 'feeling or showing certainty about something'.

Answer: (a) Lencho came earlier to the post office to know if there was a letter for him.

- (b) Lencho was angry when he counted money as it was not the full amount that he had demanded from God.
- (c) The word is 'denied'.
- (d) The word is 'confidence'.