

Chapter Review

- This chapter has two stories: 'His First Flight' by Liam O'Flaherty and 'The Black Aeroplane' by Frederick Forsyth.
- **STORY I: His First Flight.** A young seagull is afraid to fly. His father, mother and two brothers all fly, but he sits alone on a ledge and is afraid to take off.
- His family coax him, shout at him and even tease him, but he cannot jump. At last they leave him, to be hungry and alone, hoping that hunger will push him to try.
- After a whole day, he sees his mother flying across with a piece of fish. Starving, he is tempted and rushes out to get the fish, forgetting his fear. He falls but the wings open and he finds he can fly.
- He swoops, dives and soars, calls in joy and then eats with his family. The story shows that fear is conquered by a push, and that parents know when to help.
- **STORY II: The Black Aeroplane.** A pilot is flying alone from France to England in an old Dakota at night. Weather is fine and he is flying through the clouds, dreaming of the breakfast he will have.
- He sees a black aeroplane with no lights flying beside him, but there is no one in it. Soon the storm worsens and he is lost in dark clouds. His compass is not working and fuel is low.
- He sees the black plane again. He follows it and finds himself over an airport safely. When he lands, he asks the woman at the control centre about the other plane, and she says there was only one plane on the radar: his own.
- She tells him that no other plane was flying that night, and the pilot is amazed. Was it his own self, or a guardian aeroplane? The story ends with a touch of mystery.

- *Message: In danger and difficulty, one's confidence, courage and a calm mind can save one's life. The two stories share a theme: courage and confidence in the face of fear.*

Key Terms

Ledge – A narrow shelf of rock sticking out from a cliff.

Coaxing – Gently persuading someone to do something.

Swooped – Moved suddenly and rapidly downwards.

Dakota – An old type of passenger aeroplane.

Radar – A system that shows the position of aircraft on a screen.

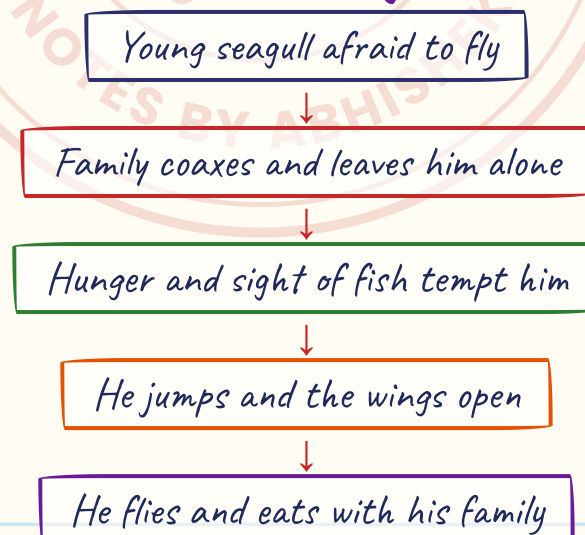
Hallucination – Seeing something that is not really there.

Compass – A device used to know directions.

Control tower – The building at an airport that directs planes.

Diagrams / Flowcharts

His First Flight



The Black Aeroplane

Pilot flies at night, lost in storm



Sees a black plane with no one inside



Follows it and reaches the airport



Control woman says only one plane flew



Mystery: was it his own self?

About the Authors

- Liam O'Flaherty (1896-1984) was an Irish writer. 'His First Flight' is a short story about courage, told through the life of a seagull.
- Frederick Forsyth (born 1938) is a British thriller writer and a former pilot. 'The Black Aeroplane' is a mystery of the air.

Themes

- Fear is natural, but courage grows when we try. A small push can bring out hidden strength.
- Parents sometimes need to leave children alone, so that they learn to stand on their own.
- Presence of mind and calm save lives in a crisis.

Textbook Exercise Questions

Q.1 Why was the young seagull afraid to fly? (His First Flight)

Ans. He was afraid because he had never flown before. He thought his wings would not support him and he would fall into the sea. His brothers had

already flown, but he did not have the courage.

Q.2 'The sight of the food maddened him.' What does this mean?

Ans. He had not eaten for a whole day. When he saw his mother with the fish, his hunger was so great that he forgot his fear and rushed to get it.

Q.3 How did the mother seagull make him fly?

Ans. She stayed away with a piece of fish, just out of reach, and tempted him with it. When he was famished, he dived for the fish and found that he could fly.

Q.4 Why did the other seagulls leave him alone for a day? Was it right?

Ans. The family knew coaxing had failed. They hoped that hunger and loneliness would make him brave enough to try. It was a tough but wise method, as it worked.

Q.5 What was the pilot dreaming of as he flew? (The Black Aeroplane)

Ans. He was dreaming of the breakfast he would have in England. He was happy and relaxed, flying through a calm night.

Q.6 What did the pilot see that surprised him?

Ans. He saw a black aeroplane flying beside him, without any lights, and there was nobody in the cockpit. It was a strange and mysterious sight.

Q.7 How did the black aeroplane help the pilot?

Ans. When the pilot was lost in the storm with low fuel and a failed compass, the black plane flew ahead and led him to the airport, where he landed safely.

Q.8 What did the woman at the control centre say to him?

Ans. She said there was no other aeroplane in the sky that night. She had seen only his plane on the radar.

Q.9 What do you think happened? Was it the pilot's own self that helped him?

Ans. Probably the pilot's own self helped him. In fear, he might have been hallucinating. He was a good pilot and his own courage and instinct may have guided him. The story deliberately leaves it unsolved, as a mystery.

Board Exam Questions (Important)

Q.1 Compare the two stories: what is common between them? (4-5 lines)

Ans. Both stories deal with fear and courage. The seagull overcomes the fear of flying with the push of hunger, and the pilot overcomes the danger of the storm with presence of mind.
In both, a mysterious force or hunger helps us find the courage that was within us.

Q.2 Why does the author say the pilot's face was 'as white as a sheet'? / How did the pilot feel when he heard the woman? (Short)

Ans. The pilot was shocked and amazed to hear there was no other aeroplane. He had seen and followed it for a long time, so the news made him feel both fear and awe.

Q.3 Write a note on the father of the seagull. What was his role?

Ans. The father was the one who guided the young seagull, along with the mother. He encouraged the young bird with food and with words. Eventually the parents' decision to leave him alone made him fly.

Q.4 Value-based: What does 'His First Flight' teach us about overcoming fear?

Ans. It teaches that fear is mostly in the mind. When we are pushed into a situation, or when we want something strongly, we find the strength to

do it. We should try new things instead of staying in our comfort zone.

Q.5 Reference to context: 'Probably, it was the narrator's own self that helped him through the storm.' Explain.

Ans. The pilot's own courage and skill took him through the danger. Having no other aircraft on the radar, it suggests that he imagined the black plane in his fear, or that his mind found a way to save him.

