

11. Abraham Lincoln's Letter to his Son's Headmaster

Worksheet 1

COMPREHENSION

The virtues of self-discipline, self-restraint and self-development, which are the quintessence of Indian dharma and culture, are as fully relevant today as they were at their first teaching three thousand years ago. You almost hear their echoes in Sir Thomas Taylor's Convocation to the Aberdeen University:

"There are, of course, moral duties which the law will enforce. But beyond the sphere of duty which is legally enforceable, there is a vast range of significant behaviour in which the law does not and ought not to intervene... Now this feeling of obedience to the unenforceable is the very opposite of the attitude that whatever is technically possible is allowable... This power of discipline is the very opposite of the fatal arrogance, which asserts, whether in government, science, industry or personal behaviour, that whatever is technically possible is licit... All through history men have needed it to preserve them from the temper which hardens the heart and perverts the understanding. For our generation it is nothing less than the prime condition of survival."

... Our old sages judge the greatness of a State not by the extent of its empire or by the size of its wealth, but by the degree of righteousness and justice which marked the public administration and the private lives of the citizens. Their timeless teaching was that man's true progress is to be judged by moral and spiritual standards, and not by material or physical standards.

[From: India's Priceless Heritage—by N.A. Palkhivala]

A. Read the above passage and answer the questions.

1. Which virtues form the quintessence of Indian dharma and culture?
2. What is beyond the legally enforceable sphere of duty?
3. Which of the following two attitudes does the author recommend: (a) obedience to the unenforceable; or (b) whatever is technically possible is allowable?
4. In the last two sentences of Sir Thomas Taylor's speech quoted above, what does 'it' refer to?
5. How did our old sages judge the greatness of a State?

B. Use the following words in sentences of your own.

1. quintessence _____
2. enforceable _____
3. fatal _____
4. licit _____

5. temper (as used in the passage) _____
6. perverts (as used in the passage) _____

C. Fill in the blank using words from the passage.

1. The virtues of _____, _____ and _____ are as _____ today as when they were first taught.
2. There are _____ duties which the law will _____.
3. There is a vast _____ of _____ behaviour in which the _____ does not and ought not to _____.
4. The power of _____ is the very opposite of the _____ arrogance which _____ that whatever is _____ possible is _____.
5. Man's true _____ is to be judged by _____ and _____ standards and not by _____ and _____ standards.

Worksheet 2

GRAMMAR

A. Rewrite the following sentences in reported speech.

1. Papa said, "Please fetch my glasses, Nitin."
2. "Why," asked the teacher, "did you come late today, Shoban?"
3. The shopkeeper said, "Here's your packet, ma'am." "Thank you," replied Mrs Raja.
4. "What a lovely dress!" She said.
5. "Sit down and keep quiet," He said.

B. Give the meanings of the following clichés.

1. Look before you leap : _____
2. Count your blessings : _____
3. Half a loaf is better than no bread. : _____
4. A stitch in time saves nine : _____
5. Never say die. : _____

C. Write a paragraph of about 150 words on the following.

Slow and steady wins the race.

D. State if the following are simple, compound or complex sentences.

1. My uncle received the guests.
2. The boy who was blind won the music competition.
3. There was very heavy rain, so, the schools were closed.

Worksheet 3

VOCABULARY AND WRITING

A. Out of the letters of the words below make at least four words each.

1. medicinal _____
2. ostensible _____
3. opposite _____
4. moderate _____
5. development _____

B. Fill in prepositional phrases to complete the sentences.

on the table on this route at the airport in a basket
behind the bush with our friends into the house beside her mother

1. She carried the kitten _____.
2. How far will we travel _____?
3. We will go to the film _____.
4. Please put the glass _____.
5. The ball had rolled _____.
6. The man went _____.
7. Who will be waiting for you _____?
8. Mini walked quietly _____.

C. Write five sentences about why you are happy to be Indian.
