

Class VIII (English)

It So Happened
(Supplementary Reader)
The Treasure Within

by Ms Bela Raja

About The Author



Bela Raja is a counsellor and special educator who has specialised in the area of specific learning difficulties. She started her career twenty four years back in Delhi under the guidance and tutelage of Dr Sunita Sodhi of Educare India, which was one of the premier institutions in the field of learning difficulties. Bela went on to do an advanced course in special education with an organization called the KPAMRC (Karnataka Parents Association for Mentally retarded Children) in Bangalore. She has worked with The Valley School (KFI) Bangalore for eight years and has set up a Resource Centre within the school where the special needs of children are looked after. She has worked with several schools of the Krishnamurti Foundation and has worked with institutions in different parts of the country. At this point, Bela is working to empower parents and teachers and to emphasise the importance of developing thinking skills in children and in conjunction with that, the extreme importance of controlled movement in the development of a child.

Introduction

The treasure within is a lesson based on a conversation between Ms. Bela, who is the editor of the newsletter “sparsh” and Mr. Hafeez Contracting who is one of India’s leading architects.

The Treasure Within refers to the hidden talent of every child. Every child has a certain area of interest and expertise and if he is able to discover his aptitude and get right guidance in right time, he can do wonders.



As the interview started and Hafeez contractor was asked about his schooling and education, he became quite nostalgic. He had an unhappy schooling. Hafeez contractor had always suffered from a nightmare about appearing for a math's examination in which he was the worst. He had no interest in study. He was fond of playing pranks on others, copying in class during examination times, making jokes. He passed all the school exams by using unfair means.



One day his principal called upon him and spoke to him at length about his studies and one sentence spoken by his principal changed his life. He was in the 11th standard then. The Principal said that Hafeez was a good student, but had little interest in studies. He (the principal) had taken care of him till that day but now he could no longer take care of him. He should study hard. Only sports won't take him far. He took his final examination. When he got a second class, 50 percent, in his SSC, his Principal said "Son, consider yourself as having got a distinction". This moment of his school life stayed in his memory forever.



Hafeez was pulled up by his teachers at school. He received a caning every week for not doing homework or for his bad behavior. Caning did hurt him badly, but he forgot about it soon when he was in playground. Every Saturday he went to see a movie. He was the leader of a gang of boys and took part in going fights. He used to open his textbooks only on the day just before exams.



Hafeez contractor was very good at sports. He had been a senior champion for so many years and also the school captain. He was always helpful to his mother. He wanted to join army or police force but couldn't do so due to the objection from his mother. He couldn't join architecture as his percentage was low. So he joined Jai hind college in Bombay. There he started learning French without much success. Later he learnt it from his cousin.



One day, he was sitting in the office of his cousin's husband, where he used to go to learn French. There he saw a man drawing a window details. He observed it and said to that man that the window he had designed would not open. His cousin's husband, who was a good architect, was surprised. He asked him to join architecture as he could do better in it. He himself took HC to the principal of an architecture college who assured him to help if he qualified the entrance exams. By luck HC did more than expectation and got admission there.



Replying to question whether giftedness and learning disabilities go hand in hand, HC said that he had seen some of those, who were ordinary, were doing better jobs. He himself was good at everything except in study. However, he achieved a very good name in the field of architecture. When asked about his clients and their liking, he says that he looks at his client's face, the way he talks and pronounces, and sketches spontaneously on a paper on the spot. One can call it instinct or arithmetic, for him it is mathematics.

This was summary of “The Treasure Within”, a very inspiring excerpt from the interview of the amazing architect Mr. Hafeez contractor.



Difficult Meanings

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------------------|
| Nightmare | – | frightening dream |
| Prank | – | a piece of mischief |
| Wrath | – | anger |
| Cakewalk | – | something easy to achieve |
| Ammunition | – | arms |
| Defied | – | broke |
| Client | – | buyer |
| Spontaneously | – | in a natural way |
| Interpretation | – | understanding |

Comprehension Check



Q1. What did Hafeez Contractor have nightmares about?

Q2. What did the Principal say to him, which influenced him deeply?

Q3. “...that year I did not step out on the field.” What was he busy doing that year?

Q4. Hafeez Contractor wanted to join the police force. Why didn't he?

Q5. In the architect's office, Hafeez Contractor was advised to drop everything and join architecture. Why?

Q6. (i) What was Mrs. Gupta's advice to Hafeez contractor?

(ii) What made her advise him so?

Q7. How did he help fellow students who had lost a button?

Q8. Which rules did Hafeez Contractor break as a school boy?

Answers

Comprehension Check

Ans 1. Hafeez Contractor had nightmares about mathematics examination.

Ans 2. The Principal said to HC to take care of himself. It influenced him deeply.

Ans 3. He was busy preparing for exams.

Ans 4. Hafeez Contractor did not join the police force because his mother told him not to opt for this job.

Ans 5. One day , in the architect's office, Hafeez Contractor saw a man drawing a window details. He observed it and said to the man that the window he drawn would not open. His cousin's husband was amazed too see his intelligence in architecture. So, he advised Hafeez Contractor to drop everything and join architecture.

Ans 6. (i) Mrs. Gupta had advised Hafeez Contractor to become an architecture when he grew up.

(ii) The sketches of Hafeez Contractor in his primary level made Mrs. Gupta advise him so.

Ans 7. He was always helpful to his classmates. When anyone had lost a button he would make a button by cutting a piece of chalk.

Ans 8. Hafeez Contractor broke the rule by copying in exams.

Assignment

Imagine you are Hafeez Contractor.
Write a paragraph throwing light on secrets of your success (about 100-120 words).

Thank You
Neerja Tripathi
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Worksheet

Read the following extracts from the lesson and answer the following questions in one word / sentence.

1. **“You don’t have your father, your mother has worked so hard to bring you up and paid all your fees all these years but you have only played games. Now you should rise to the occasion and study.”**

1) Who is the speaker?

2) Who is being addressed?

3) Why was the listener brought up single handedly by his mother?

4) What was the only interest of the listener?

5) The effect of the speaker’s advice was negative on the listener.
Right or Wrong?

2. “ I will allow you to take part in the entrance exams, but if you do not do well I will not allow you to join”.

1) Who is speaking these lines?

2) Who is the examinee?

3) Did the examinee perform well in the entrance exam?

4) Which grade he got in entrance exam?

5) What did he join after clearing this exam?