

DEEP WATER

Q: Why was YMCA pool safe for swimming?

A: Though the Yakima River was a little treacherous, but the YMCA pool was safer for swimming. It offered ideal conditions for swimming. First It was only two or three feet deep at the shallow end and nine feet deep at the other end. The drop was gradual and there was very little chance of getting drowned.

Q: What was Douglas' mother warned him about and why?

A: Douglas' mother frequently warned him about the treacherous behavior of the river Yakima. She often shared with him the incidents of each drowning in the river. She kept fresh all the details of previous drowning in the river to keep the boy away from the river.

Q: How did Douglas develop an aversion to water?

A: Once Douglas, with his father, went to a sea shore in California. While he was standing in the surf holding his father, a big wave came, knocked him down and swept over him. He almost lost his breath for next few seconds. This created in him a phobia for water and the fear stayed with him for many years to come.

Q: What was the misadventure that Douglas talked about?

A: One day, While Douglas was sitting all along at the side of the YMCA pool, waiting for other boys and girls to come, a big bruiser boy came, picked him up and tossed him into the deep end of the pool. The boy landed on sitting position, swallowed water and immediately went to the bottom of the pool. He tried to bring his legs up but they hung like dead weight. His lungs started to ach and head was throbbing terribly.

Q: What was the plan Douglas made to save himself from that awful water?

A: Douglas was pushed into the YMCA pool by a big bruiser boy. Though he was a little panicked, but his main was working fast. While drowning, he made a plan that as his feet would touch the bottom of the pool; he would take/make a big jump, come to the surface, lie flat and paddled to the edge of the pool and be safe.

Q: How did Douglas struggled to save himself in the YMCA pool?

or

Q: What was the immediate effect on Douglas of the drowning incident?

A: Douglas was tossed into the YMCA pool by a big bruiser boy. Immediately, he started to go down the pool. For next few minutes, the boy struggled hard to get out of the pool and free himself from the excruciating pain. He stuck hard to get his face out of the water to catch breath but failed. He tried to get his leg up but they hung like dead weight. The over powering force of water was pulling him down.

Q: What effect did the drowning incident have on Douglas.

A: The Drowning incident in the YMCA pool developed in Douglas a deep phobia for water. As he went home, he felt very weak. The fear of water made him cry and tremble in his bed. The haunting fear would seize his mind and heart form many days to come. The slightest exertion would make him wobbly in the knees and sick in the stomach. It deprived him from all the water sports.

Q: Explain "I crossed to the oblivion and curtain of life fell."

A: Douglas was pushed into the YMCA pool by a big bruiser boy. For next few minutes the boy struggled hard to get out of the pool and free himself from the excruciating pain. He had three futile/failed attempts to get himself out of that awful water and be safe. But the overpowering force of water pulled him inside. As his strength was getting exhausted, he gave up all efforts to save himself. He felt dizzy and let himself be carried away by the awful water.

Q. Mention any two long term consequences of the drowning incident?

A. The drowning incident left a deep and prolonged impact on Douglas. Now he had a phobia of water that seized his mind and heart for many years to come. It deprived him from all water sports. He could not get into water to take bath. The very sight of water made him panicked and wobbly in the knees. Wherever he went the same terror of water would follow him.

Q. What did the author do to overcome the fear of water? Did he succeed? Give reasons for your belief?

A. Douglas was determined to overcome the terror of water. With the help of a professional trainer, he practiced hard for five days a week. He was taught to inhale and exhale in and out of the water. He also learnt to control his legs by kicking them for many hours. Thus within a few weeks, the instructor perfected him in the art of swimming.

Q: What does Douglas mean when he says "the instructor was finished by I was not".

A: Douglas took the help of a professional trainer to learn swimming. He went through a tough training program for next three months and the instructor was done with his work. But Douglas still had miniature of doubts in his mind. He wanted to test himself by swimming alone for a long distance.

Q: What does the author want to mean when he refers Roosevelt said, 'All we have to fear is fear.'

A: Roosevelt had rightly said that 'all we have to fear is fear itself.' fear is a strange phenomenon of life and it is experienced by all. Our fear is the biggest impediment in the path of success. If we surrender, it overpowers us but if we fight back, we can defeat this fear and come victorious. Douglas showed a great courage and determination to challenge this fear. He fought back and released himself from this fear.

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Q.1 What was the haunting fear that besieged Douglas for many days after the misadventure at the pool? What measures did he take to overcome this fear?

A. Douglas had two unhappy experiences first at the sea shore and secondly at the YMCA Pool when the overpowering force of water terrified the little boy and created in him a phobia for water. Whenever the boy saw water or tried to put his face into it, the same old terror would return and control him. It made him feel upset in stomach and wobbly in his knees. His limbs would turn rigid and paralyzed to see water. He could no longer enjoy water sports like canoeing and rafting.

The boy was not ready to surrender and live with this fear. He was determined to fight back and overcome it. He took help of a professional instructor/trainer and went through a tough training. He went to pool and practiced swimming five days a week. He learnt to swim back and forth across the pool. Then he learnt to exhale and inhale in and out of the water. Next the instructor trained him to kick and control his legs. Finally, the instructor put all the pieces of his training at one place and asked him to swim full length of the pool. Douglas still had residual doubts in his mind. He tried himself between two islands. The fear returned in miniature but now he could frown and challenge this fear with another dive. Thus with his strong determination, he perfected himself in swimming and felt released.

Q: If we surrender ourselves to our fear, they overpower us; if we face them, they fade away' do you agree? Why? Why not? Discuss with reference to the lesson 'deep water'.

A: Fear is a strange phenomenon/force that controls the lives of people. Most of us have some kind of fear – fear from water, height, speed, some situation, subject and so on. If we surrender before the fear, it overpowers us (get the better of us) and controls our lives. Gradually, it becomes our handicap and stays with us throughout the life. We feel constrained and suffocated as the fear within does not allow us to do those things that we could do if we were not controlled by this fear. In his poem, "freedom from fear" Ravindra Nath Tagore asks the fellow Indians to fight the fear of their hearts to win freedom for the nation. Roosevelt has also said, 'all we have to fear is fear itself.'

Douglas had two unhappy experiences first at the sea shore and secondly at the YMCA Pool that created in him a fear of water. But the boy did not surrender before this fear. With his strong determination and dedication, he fought back and defeated this fear. In his struggle, he learnt the true lesson of life that, 'there is fear only in the fear of death. If we fight back, we can defeat this fear.'

Q:2 Justify the title of the story 'Deep Water'.

A: The title 'Deep Water' suits the story. The whole story revolves round Douglas' fear of water and his struggle to overcome it. The poor boy had two unhappy experiences first at the sea shore and secondly at the YMCA Pool that created in him a phobia for water. He developed an aversion for water. This fear deprived him from all water sports like canoeing and rafting. Whenever he saw 'Deep Water' he felt upset in his stomach and wobbly in knees.

But the boy was determined to overcome this fear. He could not live with this handicap throughout his life. With the help of a professional trainer, he underwent a tough training and learnt swimming. Every time the fear of 'Deep Water' returned and tried to control him, he frowned at it and challenged it with another dive in the 'Deep Water'. Finally, he tried his strength when he swam across two islands. This experience has a deeper meaning in his life. He realizes that there is fear only in the fear of death. If we fight back we can defeat this fear.

