



**Sound of Music  
Worksheet**

**Read the following extracts and answer the questions that follow in one or two lines each.**

1. It was her first day at the prestigious Royal Academy of Music in London and daunting enough for any teenager fresh from a Scottish farm. But this aspiring musician faced a bigger challenge than most:

**(a) Who is referred to as the ‘aspiring musician’?**

Evelyn Glennie is referred to as the aspiring musician.

**(b) What was likely to daunt teenager?**

The first day in a great and renowned institute like The Royal Academy of Music, London was likely to daunt any teenager.

**(c) What do you understand by the expression: “fresh from a Scottish farm”? “**

Fresh from a Scottish farm” implies that the girl belonged to the family of farmers in Scotland and had not yet attained much experience or exposure in the world.

**(d)What bigger challenge did she have to face?**

The ‘bigger challenge’ that she had to face was to rise in spite of her total hearing impairment.

2. had learnt to open my mind and body to sounds and vibrations.” The rest was sheer determination and hard work.

**(a) Who is the speaker in the first line?**

In the first line, the speaker is Evelyn Glennie, the famous multi-percussionist.

**(b)How was she able to hear sounds and vibrations?**

She was able to hear sounds and vibrations by sensing them through her body and her mind. Being deaf, she could not hear with her ears so she had trained and sensitized her body and mind.

**(c)What does ‘the rest’ stand for? How could she achieve it?**

The rest' stands for the greatest heights that Evelyn scaled in the sphere of percussion music. Her firm determination and dedicated work enabled her to achieve those heights.

## **SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

**(to be answered in about 30 – 40 words each)**

**Q1. How old was Evelyn when she went to the Royal Academy of Music? Why was she nervous on her way to the academy?** **(Textual)**

**Ans.** Evelyn was only seventeen years of age when she went to the Royal Academy of Music, London. Her nervousness was the result of her young age and lack of exposure. Coming from a farmland in Scotland, she had not experienced much of the world. In addition, going to a big institute like The Royal Academy of Music with her hearing disability made her uneasy.

**2. When was Evelyn's deafness first noticed? When was it confirmed?** **(Textual)**

**Or**

**How did Evelyn's parents come to discover her deafness?**

**Ans.** Evelyn's deafness was first noticed when she was eight years old. In fact, her mother had noticed it when Evelyn had not responded to a call for a performance on the piano. Her deafness was confirmed at the age of eleven when her poor academic performance forced her parents to consult a specialist, who discovered that her hearing was badly impaired because of gradual nerve damage.

**3. Everything suddenly looked black". Why does Evelyn say so?**

**Ans.** When Evelyn was advised to use hearing aids and join the school for the deaf, she felt that her future was bleak and dark. She was depressed, as all hope for great achievements seemed to have vanished. She had now become a disabled child who could not have easy access to normal life.

**4. How is Evelyn an inspiration for the handicapped people?**

**Ans.** Evelyn's achievements, gained through determination and hard work, set an example before other handicapped people. They gain confidence from her example and believe that they too can achieve their goals in life by overcoming their handicaps with firm determination.

**5.If you work hard and know where you are going, you'll get there,” remarks Evelyn Glennie. What does it reveal about her character?**

**Or**

**Which traits of Evelyn’s personality enabled her to overcome the challenge of deafness?**

**Or**

**Which values of life strengthened Evelyn against the handicap of her deafness? What does her career teach to the handicapped people?**

Evelyn’s firm determination, her industrious nature and her clarity of aim are well revealed in her statement. These values of her character have enabled her to overcome her handicap of deafness very bravely. Although she developed hearing impairment at a young age of eight only, she never let it become a stumbling block in her way to success.

Firmly determined to lead the life of a normal person, Evelyn never gave up her passion for music. The encouragement and training provided by Ron Forbes paved the way for her advancement and she stuck to the path filled with confidence. It was this confidence and faith in herself that made her dare to audition for the Royal Academy of Music, London where she received the topmost awards.

Evelyn is a workaholic. This helped her to toil hard, in fact much harder than the classical musicians to bring percussion to the front stage in the orchestra. She believes that no goal is unachievable for those who work hard and are focused on the goal. With her earnest efforts, she moved from orchestra to solo performances and eventually became an internationally renowned percussionist owing to her command over a large number of instruments. She had the courage and confidence to trample down her disability and move on without looking back.

Her firm decisions, her sincere efforts, her passionate labour, and her untiring devotion to music are a source of inspiration for the people with challenges.

**6.Why is Bismillah Khan so attached to the Ganga?**

**Ans.** Bismillah Khan is greatly attached to the Ganga. He had spent his childhood playing and practising Shehnai on the banks of the Ganga. He gets inspiration from the Ganga. He cannot imagine his life happy if he is away from her. He loves the Ganga very much.

**7.“15th August, 1947, the first Independence Day was the happiest day of his life.” Why?**

**Ans.** On the first Independence Day, Bismillah Khan played the Shehnai at the ramparts of the Red Fort in Delhi. Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru had invited him to play the Shehnai there. It was a great honour for him. So it was the happiest day of his life.

**8.How did Bismillah Khan bring the ‘shehnai’ onto the classical stage?**

**Ans.** Traditionally, the shehnai was played in the royal court as one of the nine instruments together known as *naubat*. Bismillah Khan made it an independent instrument and gave its music a place among other classical instrumental music.

**. 9.Where did Bismillah Khan usually sing at the age of five? How was he rewarded and by whom?**

**Ans.** At the age of five, Bismillah Khan usually sang the Bhojpuri ‘chaita a’ in the Bihariji temple in his native town Dumraon in Bihar. At the end of the song, he earned a big laddu weighing 1.25 kg which was given by the local Maharaja as a prize.

**10. Why did Bismillah Khan refuse to start a shehnai school in the U.S.A.? (Textual)**

**Ans.** Bismillah Khan was a staunch patriot and was passionately in love with Benaras and Dumraon in India. He intensely loved the Ganga and could not stay away from the sacred river. Therefore, he declined the offer to settle down in the US and head a shehnai school there.

**11. How does the author of "The Sound of Music" portray Bismillah Khan as a great patriot?**

**Or**

**Bismillah Khan, on receiving the Bharat Ratna, remarked, "Teach your children music, this is Hindustan's richest tradition; even the West is now coming to learn our music." What does it reveal about his sentiments towards India?**

**Ans.** Bismillah Khan, in "The Sound of Music", emerged as a person imbued with intense and strong patriotic emotions. He had a profound and passionate love for his birthplace, Dumraon in Bihar and for Benaras where he took training to play the shehnai. He feels a deep bond with the Ganga because the flowing waters of the holy river made him improvise and spontaneously play new raagas – the ones which were earlier regarded to be beyond the range of the shehnai. Such was Bismillah Khan's love for his country and the Ganga that he refused to settle down in America to head a school for the shehnai. His strong attachment with the sacred river made him miss Benaras when he was in Mumbai or elsewhere. Equally strong was his bonding with his birthplace Dumraon.

Bismillah Khan had a great regard for the Hindustani music which, for him, is the richest cultural heritage of India. He wanted the tradition of the Indian music to be carried on from generation to generation. That is why he advised the people of India to teach music to their children and felt proud that this music fascinated even the people of the west.

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