

## Chapter 8.

### Reach For The Top

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#### Before You Read

**Q1.** Think for a while and make a list of three to five persons you idolise, or admire very much for their achievements. Your idols may be from any sphere of life — sports, medicine, media, or art and culture.

**Answer.** Do Attempt it.

**Q2.** A Russian girl, Maria Sharapova, reached the summit of women's tennis when she was barely eighteen. As you read about her, see if you can draw a comparison between her and Santosh Yadav.

**Answer.** Do Attempt it.

**Q3.**

|                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>something disarming<br/>at odds with<br/><br/>glamorous attire<br/>in almost no time<br/><br/>poised beyond her<br/>years<br/>packed off<br/>launched<br/>heart wrenching</i> | <i>quickly, almost immediately into<br/>more calm, confident and in control<br/>than people of her age usually are<br/>in contrast to; not agreeing with<br/>something that makes you feel friendly,<br/>taking away your suspiciousness<br/>sent off<br/><br/>attractive and exciting clothes<br/>causing strong feelings of sadness<br/>started</i> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Answer.**

|                         |                                                                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| something               | something that makes you feel friendly, taking                         |
| disarming               | away your suspiciousness                                               |
| at odds with            | in contrast to; not agreeing with                                      |
| glamorous               | attire attractive and exciting clothes                                 |
| in almost no time       | quickly, almost immediately                                            |
| poised beyond her years | more calm, confident and in control than people of her age usually are |
| packed off              | sent off                                                               |
| launched                | started                                                                |
| heart wrenching         | causing strong feelings of sadness                                     |

**Q4. As you read, look for the answers to these questions.**

**(i) Why was Maria sent to the United States?**

**(ii) Why didn't her mother go with her?**

**(iii) What are her hobbies? What does she like?**

**(iv) What motivates her to keep going?**

**Answer.** (i) Maria was sent to the United States for her tennis training. That trip to Florida with her father launched her on the path to success and stardom.

(ii) Her mother could not go with her because of visa restrictions.

(iii) Her hobbies are fashion, singing and dancing. She likes reading the novels of Arthur Conan Doyle. On the one hand, she is fond of sophisticated evening gowns and on the other, of pancakes with chocolate spread and fizzy orange drinks.

(iv) Apart from money, the motivation to become the number one in the world keeps her going.

### Thinking About The Text

**Q1 (I) Answer these questions in one or two sentences each. (The paragraph numbers within brackets provide clues to the answers.)**

**1. Why was the 'holy man' who gave Santosh's mother his blessings surprised? (1)**

**2. Give an example to show that even as a young girl Santosh was not ready to accept anything unreasonable. (2)**

**3. Why was Santosh sent to the local school? (3)**

**4. When did she leave home for Delhi, and why? (4)**

**5. Why did Santosh's parents agree to pay for her schooling in Delhi? What mental qualities of Santosh are brought into light by this incident? (4)**

**Answer.** 1. The 'holy man' was surprised because he had assumed that Santosh's mother wanted a son. However, the unborn child's grandmother told him that they did not want a son.

2. Santosh began living life on her own terms from the start. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts.

3. Even though Santosh's parents could afford to send their children to the best schools, she was sent to the local village school due to the prevailing custom in the family.

4. When she turned sixteen and was under pressure to get married, Santosh threatened her parents that she would never marry if she did not get a proper education. Therefore, she left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi.

5. When Santosh's parents refused to pay for her education, she politely informed them of her plans to earn money by working part time to pay her school fees. Then, her parents agreed to pay for her schooling in Delhi. This shows that Santosh was a mentally-strong girl and was ready to work very hard to get herself properly educated.

**QII. 1. How did Santosh begin to climb mountains?**

**2. What incidents during the Everest expedition show Santosh's concern for her team-mates?**

**3. What shows her concern for the environment?**

**4. How does she describe her feelings at the summit of the Everest?**

**5. Santosh Yadav got into the record books both times she scaled Mt Everest. What were the reasons for this?**

**Answer.** 1. From her room in Kasturba Hostel, she watched people going up the Aravalli Hills and vanishing after a while. On investigating, she found certain mountaineers, whom she later accompanied in their climbing expedition. This was how she began climbing mountains.

2. During the Everest mission, Santosh helped a dying climber, but she was unsuccessful in saving him. However, she managed to save another climber, Mohan

Singh, by sharing her oxygen with him. These incidents show her concern for her team-mates.

3. Santosh was a fervent environmentalist. She collected and brought down 500 kilograms of garbage from the Himalayas.

4. Santosh says that the feeling at the summit of the Everest was indescribable. Unfurling the Indian flag on the top of the world was a spiritual moment for her. She felt proud as an Indian.

5. When Santosh Yadav first scaled Mt Everest, she became the youngest woman in the world to achieve the feat. On repeating this feat, she became the only woman to have scaled the Everest twice.

**QIII. Complete the following statements.**

1. From her room in Kasturba Hostel, Santosh used to \_\_\_\_\_

2. When she finished college, Santosh had to write a letter of apology to her father because \_\_\_\_\_

3. During the Everest expedition, her seniors in the team admired her \_\_\_\_\_ while \_\_\_\_\_ endeared her to fellow climbers

**Answer.** 1. From her room in Kasturba Hostel, Santosh used to watch villagers going up the hill and suddenly vanishing after a while.

2. When she finished college, Santosh had to write a letter of apology to her father because she had got herself enrolled at Uttarkashi Nehru Institute of Mountaineering without his permission.

3. During the Everest expedition, her seniors in the team admired her climbing skills, physical fitness and mental strength while her concern for others and desire to work together with them endeared her to fellow climbers.

**QIV. Pick out words from the text that mean the same as the following words or expressions. (Look in the paragraphs indicated.)**

1. took to be true without proof (1): \_\_\_\_\_

2. based on reason; sensible; reasonable (2): \_\_\_\_\_

3. the usual way of doing things (3): \_\_\_\_\_

4. a strong desire arising from within (5): \_\_\_\_\_

5. the power to endure, without falling ill (7): \_\_\_\_\_

**Answer.** 1. took to be true without proof (1): Assumed

2. based on reason; sensible; reasonable (2): Rational

3. the usual way of doing things (3): Custom

4. a strong desire arising from within (5): Urge

5. the power to endure, without falling ill (7): Resistance

**Q2. Working in small groups of 4–5 students, go back over the two passages on Santosh Yadav and Maria Sharapova and complete the table given below with relevant phrases or sentences**

|    | <i>Points of Comparison/Contrast</i>          | <i>Santosh Yadav</i> | <i>Maria Sharapova</i> |
|----|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | Their humble beginning                        |                      |                        |
| 2. | Their parents' approach                       |                      |                        |
| 3. | Their will power and strong desire to succeed |                      |                        |
| 4. | Evidence of their mental toughness            |                      |                        |
| 5. | Their patriotism                              |                      |                        |

**Answer.**

|    | Points of Comparison/Contrast | Santosh Yadav                                                                 | Maria Sharapova                                                                                        |
|----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Their humble beginning        | She was born in the small village of Joniyawas of Rewari District in Haryana. | She was born in the frozen plains of Siberia.                                                          |
| 2. | Their parents' approach       | Her parents disapproved of her going to Delhi to get a better education.      | Her father worked as much as he could to keep her tennis-training going and that is why he took her to |

|    |                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                               | However, later they got used to her urge for more education.                                                                                 | the United States.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 3. | Their will power and strong desire to succeed | She enrolled herself at Uttarakashi's Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, went on an expedition every year, and eventually scaled Mt Everest. | She never thought of quitting as she knew what she wanted. Her will to become number one in the world kept her going.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 4. | Evidence of their mental toughness            | She went on an expedition every year. Her skills matured rapidly and equipped with mental toughness, she scaled Mt Everest.                  | She was lonely as her mother could not be in the U.S. because of visa restrictions and her father was working as much as he could to keep her tennis training going. The other tennis pupils came in at 11 p.m. and ordered her to tidy up the room and clean it. Instead of letting that depress her, she became more determined and mentally tough. |
| 5. | Their patriotism                              | When she unfurled the Indian flag at the summit of the Everest,                                                                              | She says that though the U.S. is a big part of her life, she has Russian                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|    |                                               | her feeling was indescribable. It was a spiritual moment for her and she felt proud to be an Indian.                                         | citizenship. Her blood is totally Russian and she would play Olympics for Russia if they want her to.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## Thinking About Language

**QI. Identify the two parts in the sentences below by underlining the part that gives us the information in brackets, as shown above.**

- 1. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts. (Contrasts her dress with that of others) 2018-19 108 / Beehive**
- 2. She left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi. (Tells us what happened after the first action.)**
- 3. She decided to fight the system when the right moment arrived.(Tells us when she was going to fight the system.)**
- 4. Little Maria had not yet celebrated her tenth birthday when she was packed off to train in the United States. (Tells us when Maria was sent to the U.S.)**

**Answer.** 1. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts.

2. She left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi.

3. She decided to fight the system when the right moment arrived.

4. Little Maria had not yet celebrated her tenth birthday when she was packed off to train in the United States.

**QII. Now rewrite the pairs of sentences given below as one sentence.**

- 1. Grandfather told me about the old days. All books were printed on paper then.**
- 2. What do you do after you finish the book? Perhaps you just throw it away.**
- 3. He gave the little girl an apple. He took the computer apart.**
- 4. You have nothing. That makes you very determined.**
- 5. I never thought of quitting. I knew what I wanted.**

**Answer.** 1. Grandfather told me about the old days when all books were printed on paper.

2. After finishing the book, perhaps you just throw it away.

3. He gave the little girl an apple and took the computer apart.

4. Having nothing makes you very determined.



5. I never thought of quitting as I knew what I wanted.

### Writing

**QI. Working in pairs, go through the table below that gives you information about the top women tennis players since 1975. Write a short article for your school magazine comparing and contrasting the players in terms of their duration at the top. Mention some qualities that you think may be responsible for their brief or long stay at the top spot.**

#### Top-Ranked Women Players

**The roll of honour of women who enjoyed life at the summit since everybody's favourite player, Chris Evert, took her place in 1975.**

| <i>Name</i>                      | <i>Ranked on</i>  | <i>Weeks as No. 1</i> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Maria Sharapova (Russia)         | 22 August 2005    | 1                     |
| Lindsay Davenport (U.S.)         | October 2004      | 82                    |
| Amelie Mauresmo (France)         | 13 September 2004 | 5                     |
| Justine Henin-Hardenne (Belgium) | 20 October 2003   | 45                    |
| Kim Clijsters (Belgium)          | 11 August 2003    | 12                    |
| Serena Williams (U.S.)           | 8 July 2002       | 57                    |
| Venus Williams (U.S.)            | 25 February 2002  | 11                    |
| Jennifer Capriati (U.S.)         | 15 October 2001   | 17                    |
| Lindsay Davenport (U.S.)         | 12 October 1998   | 82                    |
| Martina Hingis (Switzerland)     | 31 March 1997     | 209                   |
| Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain)  | 6 February 1995   | 12                    |
| Monica Seles (U.S.)              | 11 March 1991     | 178                   |
| Steffi Graf (Germany)            | 17 August 1987    | 377                   |
| Tracy Austin (U.S.)              | 7 April 1980      | 22                    |
| Martina Navratilova (U.S.)       | 10 July 1978      | 331                   |
| Chris Evert (U.S.)               | 3 November 1975   | 362                   |

**Answer.** Do attempt yourself

**QII. Which of these words would you use to describe Santosh Yadav? Find**

reasons in the text to support your choices, and write a couple of paragraphs describing Santosh's character.

contented   determined   resourceful   polite   adventurous   considerate  
weak-willed   fearful   independent   pessimistic   patient   persevering

**Answer.**

| Words describing Santosh | Lines which support the choice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Determined               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "When her parents refused to pay for her education, she politely informed them of her plans to earn money by working part time to pay her school fees."</li> </ul>                                                                                  |
| Polite                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "she politely informed them of her plans to earn money"</li> <li>• "just four years after she had shyly asked the Aravalli mountaineers if she could join them."</li> </ul>                                                                         |
| Adventurous              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Santosh went on an expedition every year."</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Considerate              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Santosh Yadav provided special care to a climber who lay dying at the South Col."</li> <li>• "However, she managed to save another climber, Mohan Singh, who would have met with the same fate had she not shared her oxygen with him."</li> </ul> |
| Independent              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I did not go back home; instead, I headed straight for the training."</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Persevering              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "She saved money and enrolled in a course"</li> <li>• "The culmination of her hard work and sincerity came in 1992"</li> </ul>                                                                                                                      |
| Patient                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "she decided to fight the system in her own quiet way when the right moment arrived."</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                    |

A rebel since childhood, Santosh Yadav fought the system and lived life on her own terms. She was a polite girl, who had a thirst to study "a bit more". Her attitude and assertiveness towards life and education, made her parents to relent.

She was an independent, hardworking and adventure loving mountaineer. Though her path to success was turbulent, her determination and belief in herself was quiet evident. She impressed her seniors with her mental and physical toughness; and her concern and desire to work together with her fellow climbers found her a special place in their hearts. Her involvement and fervour in environmental issues made her bring down 500 kilograms of garbage from the Himalayas.

### Thinking About The Poem

**Q1. Can a "simple jab of the knife" kill a tree? Why not?**

**Answer.** No, a simple jab of knife does not have the ability to kill the tree. It has to go through various processes. If its root is not removed from the earth, it will sprout again.

**Q2. How has the tree grown to its full size? List the words suggestive of its life and activity.**

**Answer.** The tree consumes the earth, and rises out it feeding upon its crust. It absorbs years of sunlight, air and water.

**Q3. What is the meaning of “bleeding bark”? What makes it bleed?**

**Answer.** 'Bleeding bark' means the twigs which are cut mercilessly. They leave a liquid substance. If any part of the human body is cut, it starts bleeding. In the same way the liquid substance comes out from the branch of a tree. The human beings' axe makes it bleed

**Q4. The poet says “No” in the beginning of the third stanza. What does he mean by this?**

**Answer.** 'No' is used to emphasize the perspective that chopping or hacking will not be sufficient for killing a tree.

**Q5. What is the meaning of “anchoring earth” and “earth cave”?**

**Answer.** It means that the earth protects it like a mother. 'Earth Cave' implies a hole inside it. The tree allows its roots to spread underneath. The earth protects it and fosters t It provides all the essential ingredients to the tree.

**Q6. What does he mean by “the strength of the tree exposed”?**

**Answer.** The stem/root is the strength of a tree. When the tree is pulled out, its strength is exposed.

**Q7. What finally kills the tree?**

**Answer.** Pulling out the tree from the mother earth and scorching and choking it in the sun and air kill the tree. It becomes brown, dry and gets hard. Eventually it dies.