



Lesson 8 -

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD

- ZITKAL-SA AND BAMA

NOTES ON THE LESSON**1. The cutting of long hair by : Zitkala-Sa**

- A. Her arrival to Carlisle Indian school
 - (a) Land of Apples- covered with snow
 - (b) Her confusion over bell ringing
 - (c) Dress of Indian girls- not liked by her
 - (d) Embarrassment felt in dining hall
- B. Information of her long hair to be cut
 - (a) Her friend Judewin's warning
 - (b) Short hair in her community- a disgrace
 - (c) Judewin persuaded her to surrender but she decided otherwise
- C. Zitkala's struggle to retain her hair
 - (a) Hid herself in a large dark room
 - (b) Search for her
 - (c) Women and girls discouraged/dragged her
 - (d) Her struggle against the cutting of her hair
 - (e) Her cries for help- to Mother, but futile

2. We too are human beings by Bama

- A. Bama returning from school.
 - (a) Her sensitivity towards untouchability in early age
 - (b) Her slow walk to home
 - (c) Her interest in watching the things on the way
- B. The landlord and people of her community
 - (a) People working to tread out the grain
 - (b) The elder carrying a packet
 - (c) Her discussion with her brother - Humour Vs reality
 - (d) His visit to library and the enquiry about his caste
- C. Advice of her brother
 - (a) Study and come ahead of inequality
 - (b) Impression of this advice on her

EXERCISE

Rearrange the following points in sequence of their narration in the lesson



A.

1. Cutting the long hair
2. Customs in the tribe
3. In the break-fast hall
4. Sense of discomfort
5. Struggles to save her hair

B.

1. Scene at the threshing platform
2. Her brothers advice
3. Feeling the untouchability
4. Her realization

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. How did Zitkala-Sa find the 'Eating by formula' a hard trial?

Ans. She did not know what to do when the various bells were tapped and behaved unlike others. When the first bell rang, she pulled out her chair and sat in it. As she saw others standing, she began to rise. She looked shyly around to see how chairs were used. When the second bell was sounded, she had to crawl back into her chair. She looked around when a man was speaking at the end of the hall. She dropped her eyes when she found the paleface women looking at her. After the third bell, others started eating, but she began to cry.

Q2. Why do you think, was Zitkala-Sa so opposed to cutting of her hair?

Hint - heard her mother - Short hair to mourn the death

Hair shingled of enemy

She was neither a mourner nor a coward

Q3. What did Zitkala-Sa feel when her long hair was cut.

Hint - lost her spirit

People stared at her

She moaned for her mother

Q4. Name some of the novelties and oddities in the street that attracted Bama?

Hint - the performing monkey

The cyclist

The Maariyaata temple

Pongal offerings

Q5. What do you think, made Bama want to double up and shriek with laughter?

Hint - A big man

Carrying small packet by string

Manner of walking

Q6. How did Bama react on learning about untouchability?

Hint - behaviour of upper caste to low caste

Felt provoked and angry



Wanted to touch those vadais

Q7. What advice did Annan offer Bama? What was the result?

Hint - study and learn with care

Followed advice

Studied hard

Stood first in class

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Why did Zitkala-Sa feel oppressed in new establishment?

Ans. Since the day, the author was taken away from her mother, she had suffered extreme indignities. People had stared at her. She had been tossed about in the air like wooden puppet. Her blanket had been removed from her shoulders. She felt that she was immodestly dressed. She was so shocked and oppressed that she felt like sinking to the floor. Later, her soft moccasins were taken away. These were traditional footwear of local Indian American. They were replaced by squeaking shoes. She saw other Indian girls in stiff shoes and tightly sticking dresses. The small girls wore sleeved aprons and shingled hair. The worst dignity she suffered was the cutting of her long hair. The coward's shingled hair made her moan with anguish. She felt she was not a human being but one of the little animals driven by a herder. The systematic erosion of their culture and disrespect to women was quite oppressive.

Q2. "I will not submit! I will struggle!" Says Zitkala-Sa. What was she going to resist and why? What efforts did she make and what was the outcome?

Hint - short hair worn by mourners, shingled by cowards

Cutting hair against their tradition

Hid herself in dark room

Resisted cutting her hair

Cried aloud

Q3. How did Bama react to the threshing proceedings in a corner of their street and the spectacle of a big man carrying a packet by its string?

Hint - people working with cattle

Saw a big man

Manner of walking

Carrying small packet with string

Extended the packet to landlord

Whole scene funny

Q4. How did Bama's brother explain the elder's behavior to her? What was her immediate reaction?

Hint - lower caste must not touch upper caste people

Felt terribly sad

She felt provoked and angry

They were too human beings

Must not do petty jobs for miserly rich upper caste