

## 6. COMPREHENSION

### Check your understanding:

1. Who is a layman? What do we call a person who is not a layman?
2. In the first two paragraphs the following words are used: stunned, frightened, bewildered, confused, humbled, troubled. What will be the typical behavior of people in each of the following situations:
  - a) A tiger is found in the garden or a house.
  - b) One is defeated in a match or a debate.
  - c) In the examination hall all the questions in the question paper are found to be difficult.
- 3) Can you name a situation in which
  - a) You will be stunned?
  - b) You will be bewildered?
  - c) You will be troubled?
4. What was the first reaction of the layman to the effect of the dropping of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima?
5. Why are we troubled by the realization that our brain can create things which we may not be able to control?
6. How can our search for truth bring our civilization to the brink of destruction?
7. Can our scientists afford to be concerned solely with the pursuit of truth unmindful of its consequences? What is the author's opinion? What is your opinion?
8. What, according to the author, is the towering enemy of man-kind?
9. When did Einstein write his famous equation? What is it about? Why is it so famous? Who is Einstein?

### Matching words with their meanings

Match the words with their meanings as used in the passage. Column II has one 'extra'. You may use a dictionary and look back at the essay.

| Column I             | Column II                                    |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. Indistinguishable | a. amazing in degree                         |
| 2. Arbiter           | b. free                                      |
| 3. Repercussion      | c. unfeeling                                 |
| 4. Dilemma           | d. far-reaching effect                       |
| 5. Perverted         | e. denial                                    |
| 6. Absolve           | f. cannot be differentiated being in spirits |
| 7. Distortions       | g. The state of being in high spirits        |
| 8. Stupendous        | h. passionate                                |
| 9. Callous           | i. turned to a wrong use                     |
| 10. Elation          | j. having to choose between two              |

- 11. Fervent
- 12. Disavowal

equality undesirable courses of  
action.  
k. person in complete control  
l. false  
accounts m.  
judge.

**Think and answer.**

Distinguish between:

- i. Culture and civilization
- ii. Knowledge and wisdom
- iii. Anarchy and autocracy
- iv. Education and literacy.

Under each statement given below two meanings are given. Say which one correctly explains the meaning of the italicized expression.

1. Science will plunge ahead in the pursuit of truth even if the process leaves the world in dust and ashes.  
a) in a highly pollute state. b) in a state of destruction
2. The weapons which science gives us have brought us to the door – step of doom. a) close to ruin  
b) close to evil
3. We have been most successful in pushing out the boundaries of knowledge. a) limits of our knowledge  
b) divisions of knowledge
4. We are bewildered by the power which science has placed in our laps. a) in our power  
b) at our disposal.
5. We are confronted by the tragic irony. a) sad reversal of a situation.  
b) disastrous outcome

## Notes

Raymond B. Fosdick in the lesson 'A Dilemma' says that science should be used only for the constructive purpose and not to be aimed at the degeneration of the society. August 6, 1945, a day of unfortune, on which the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima brought home to all of us about the significance (or) importance of science in human life. Mankind was frightened by science and bewildered by its enormous power. This instance has realised the mankind how unequipped we are in terms of ethics, law, and government, to know how to use it. The author says that science is based on truth and should spring from the noblest attribute of the human spirit.

There are certain inventions that can evoke both positive and negative responses. Invention of Radio, Automobiles, penicillin, Radar and jet propulsions shall be aimed towards the betterment of the society rather than creating ugliness and desolation. The gifts of science, the author vehemently feels, should not blow our civilization into drifting dust. The research and Technology yield right fruits when they are related to human welfare.

Science is the search for truth. But it is the same search for truth that has brought our civilization to the brink of destruction. The writer strongly feels that research shall be subjected to some kind of restraint if it is not linked to human constructive purpose; it is really disheartening to read about that leading scientists associated with atom bomb saying that one should not hold back progress because of fear of misuse of science

Fosdick then says that some inventions are purely accidental and the scientists never had any evil intentions while discovering them. For instance Albert Einstein never thought of atom bomb while working for his transformation equation in 1905. Yet, from this come out one of the principles upon atom bomb is based. Similarly sulphur drugs and mustard gas which are offshoots of German dye industry was not created to deal with either medicine or weapons of war; Willard Gibbs was a gentle spirit whose life was spent in his laboratory at Yale university had never dreamt that his research in the mathematical physics might have even a remote relationship to World War I & II. These discoveries are classic examples where the gifts of science can be used by evilmen to do evil men to do evil even more obviously and dramatically than can be used by men of goodwill to do good.

The author concludes that the towering enemy of mankind is not science but war. Science merely reflect the social forces by which it is surrounded.

When there is peace, science is constructive and when there is war, science is prevented to destructive ends. Our problem therefore is not to comb science but to stop war- to substitute law for force and international government for awarely in the relations of one nation with another. He feels that our education should be based on tolerance understanding and creative intelligence that should run fast enough to put an end to the evil effects of the science formally, Science must help us but the decision lies within ourselves ie., the role responsibility is of human beings.