

## Lesson 2: Beehive: THE SOUND OF MUSIC (PART 1)

**Read the following passages**  
**and answer the questions**  
**given at the end of each :**

**PASSAGE 1**

Evelyn Glennie's loss of hearing had been gradual. Her mother remembers noticing something was wrong when the eight-year-old Evelyn was waiting to play the piano. 'They called her name and she didn't move. I suddenly realised she hadn't heard,' says Isabel Glennie. For quite a while Evelyn managed to conceal her growing deafness from friends and teachers. But by the time she was eleven her marks had deteriorated and her headmistress urged her parents to take her to a specialist. It was then discovered that her hearing was severely impaired as a result of gradual nerve damage. They were advised that she should be fitted with hearing aids.

Questions: (i) At What age was her deafness sighted first?

(ii) For what her name was called?

(iii) What was Evelyn's response when her name was called?

(iv) When was her deafness confirmed?

(v) Frome whom did she try to conceal her deafness?

Answers:

**(i)** At the age of eight years.

**(ii)** Her name was called to play the piano.

**(iii)** She did not move at the call of her name.

**(iv)** Her deafness was confirmed when she was eleven years old.

**(v)** From her teachers and friends.

## Passage 2...DO IT YOURSELF

### **PASSAGE 2**

But Evelyn was not going to give up. She was determined to lead a normal life and pursue her interest in music. One day she noticed a girl playing the xylophone and decided that she wanted to play it too. Most of the teachers discouraged her but percussionist Ron Forbes spotted her potential. He began by tuning two large drums to different notes. 'Don't listen through your ears,' he would say, 'try to sense it some other way.' Says Evelyn, 'Suddenly I realised I could feel the higher drum from the waist up and the lower one from the waist down.' Forbes repeated the exercise, and soon Evelyn discovered that she could sense certain notes in different parts of her body. had learnt to open my mind and body to sounds and vibrations.' The rest was sheer determination and hard work.

## **Questions :**

- (i) What had happened to Evelyn?**
- (ii) What was she determined to?**
- (iii) Who was Ron Forbes?**
- (iv) What did he inspire Evelyn for?**
- (v) How did he ask Evelyn to hear music?**

## **LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS**

**Q1. How does Evelyn hear music?**

**(Textual)**

**Or**

**Evelyn Glennie's deafness was more than compensated by other parts of her body so far as music was concerned.**

**Discuss.**

Evelyn Glennie had a deep passion for music but unfortunately, she lost her hearing completely at the age of eleven years. She wanted to lead a normal life and play the xylophone, but her teachers discouraged her considering her deafness to be an obstruction. However, Ron Forbes, a great percussionist, trained her to listen to the musical sounds and vibrations not through ears, but through other parts of her body. He created two drums with different sounds to make her hear the higher beats from the upper part of her body and the lower beats from the parts lower than her waist. The experiment was so effective that Evelyn opened her mind and body to the fine sounds of music.

Evelyn now believes that music penetrates into her through every part – through her skin, cheekbones and even her hair. When she plays the xylophone, she feels that the sounds move from the stick into the tips of her fingers. When the drums are played, she can feel the resonant sounds pouring into her body.

**Q2. 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?**

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 has 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 with unstaggering 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.

**Q3. Suppose you are Ron Forbes. You have come to know that Evelyn Glennie has been awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society's prestigious 'Soloist of the Year Award'. Write a letter to Evelyn in about 150 words.**

**In your letter, you should**  
congratulate Evelyn on winning the prestigious  
award

- say how pleased you are at the news
- appreciate her values of hard work and dedication
- wish her great success in future

**Q4. Suppose you are Evelyn Glennie. The doctor has diagnosed that your hearing is completely lost. Write a diary entry in about 150 words about how you feel and what you plan to do.**