

Chapter -1

My First Steps

Summary

- The lesson deals with the life and career of Cricketer Sunil Gavaskar. He talks about his childhood and love for cricket. He was born with a hole near the top of his left ear lobe. This birth mark was noticed only by his uncle Mr. Narayan Masurekar.
- The next day nurses misplaced the newborn with another mother –wife of a fisherman who was also in the same ward. It would have led to a big misfortune but his uncle pointed out the mishap. If his uncle would not have paid attention ,then Gavaskar would not have been brought up by his real parents and his destiny would have been different. Gavaskar describes that this incident would have ruined him forever.
- Gavaskar remembers another incident when his mother used to bowl to him in the small gallery of their house where they played their ‘daily matches’, since the area was small one day he hit her on the nose, and it started bleeding. Although the injury was deep and painful but still she took no notice of it and continued playing.
- Gavaskar’s father was a good club cricketer and Gavaskar found his father’s advice indispensable in his career. The family had interesting discussions on various aspects of the game.
- Gavaskar’s uncle, Madhav Mantri, played for India in four ‘official’ tests and whenever he went to his uncle’s house he admired the team India pullovers. Once he even dared to ask his uncle if he could take one, since he had so many. His uncle told him that one has to work hard and earn the India ‘colours.’
- Gavaskar took his uncle’s words very seriously and decided to win rather than beg. The author learnt the lesson that there was no shortcut to success.
- In his childhood, he mostly played games in his neighbourhood with his friends. The author always wanted to be a batsman, he hated loosing his wicket. His obsession with the game was so intense, that whenever he was declared out he would walk out of the game with his bat and ball. The other boys would curse and call him names. However, the tension did not last long and the boys would become friendly again.

Important points

1. The lesson deals with the life and career of Cricketer Sunil Gavaskar. He talks about his childhood and love for cricket.
2. He was born on 10th July 1949 in a hospital with a hole near the top of his left ear lobe.
3. The birth mark was noticed only by his uncle Mr. Narayan Masurekar.
4. The next day nurses misplaced the newborn with another mother –wife of a fisherman who was also in the same ward. It would have led to a big misfortune but

his uncle pointed out the mishap. If his uncle would not have paid attention, then Gavaskar would not have been brought up by his real parents and his destiny would have been different.

5. Gavaskar's mother encouraged, supported, played with him, had patience and forbearance even when hurt. She was his first coach.
6. His mother used to bowl to him in the small gallery of their house where they played their 'daily match', he felt that cricket was in his blood. Since the area was small his mother would kneel to bowl, or rather lob the ball to him. One day he hit her on the nose, and it started bleeding. Although the injury was deep and the pain was very high, still she took no notice of it and continued playing.
7. Gavaskar's father was a good club cricketer in his days and a keen student of the game. Gavaskar found his father's advice indispensable in his career.
8. Gavaskar's uncle, Madhav Mantri, played for India in four 'official' tests, whenever he went to his uncle's house he admired the pullovers. Gavaskar was so attracted by the India test pullovers that once he even dared to ask his uncle if he could take one since he had so many. His uncle told him that one has to work hard and earn India 'colours.' Gavaskar took his uncle's words too close to his heart and decided to win rather than beg.
9. His uncle, Madhav Mantri inspired him to work hard and earn Indian colours. He taught him that there was no shortcut to success.
10. The author was obsessed with playing cricket and always wanted to be a batsman.
11. Gavaskar stopped the game when declared out, he used to walk out with his ball and bat. He occasionally had fights with his neighbourhood friends but the fights did not last for long.
12. Cleverly, his friends eventually made him accept the decision of the majority.

Learn new words:

1. Autobiography: an account of a person's life written by that person
2. Frantic: emotionally, out of control
3. Commotion: a state of confused and noisy disturbance
4. Oblivious: unaware of what is happening
5. Obscure: unknown, nor will be known
6. Cliche: something that has become overly familiar or commonplace
7. Obsession: powerfully controlling one's thought
8. Reckon: to consider
9. Succumb: to surrender to superior strength
10. Souvenirs: an object kept as a reminder of an event

11. Tremendous: huge, in great amount or level

Lesson to be learnt- One should not look for shortcuts in life, there is no shortcut to success. One should work hard and never give up.

Do you know?

Success in all our endeavors is what we all want, but most of us forget that the road to success is not strewn with roses. The walk is not a cakewalk, nor is it a gift on a platter. Success is an achievement by constant hard work. The magic of hard work and perseverance cannot be underestimated. We see in general that people who have succeeded in life have done an immense amount of hard work. We must put our heart and soul into whatever we are doing. If we have confidence in our intention, then there is nothing that can deter us from accomplishing it.

For example, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay could successfully climb Mount Everest and earn world prominence, only after making numerous unsuccessful efforts at conquering Mt. Everest.

Extend your horizon:

An autobiography is the story of your own life. After reading the first chapter try to draft your own memoir under the following subheadings:

- My childhood
- Who I am?
- My goals
- My strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluate yourself;

- 1) Why does Gavaskar title this account “My First Steps?”
- 2) Mr. Narayan Masurekar’s observation played a vital role in determining Gavaskar’s destiny. Explain.
- 3) How did little Gavaskar break his mother’s nose while playing cricket? Was the injury serious?
- 4) How did Gavaskar’s mother react to the injury?
- 5) Why did Madhav Mantri refuse Gavaskar’s plea to give him one of his many India test pullovers? How did Madhav Mantri’s refusal help Gavaskar later in his life?
- 6) Explain Gavaskar’s early obsession with cricket? What was decided and agreed upon by all the players in order to check Gavaskar’s arguing habit?

Maximize your score:

- Read the chapter carefully and make notes. Attempt all the questions carefully.
- Explain in detail Gavaskar's obsession with cricket and what motivated him the most to become a successful cricketer?