**THE SOUND OF MUSIC**

**BY: Deborah Cowley I**

### ****Vocabulary****

**Rush hour—**A time when people usually travel; **Crowd—**a large number of people gathered together;**Jostle—**push roughly; **Underground—**below the earth; **Vibration—**slight shaking movement;**Approach—**reach close;**Prestigious—**having high status;**Daunting—**tough; **Aspiring—**having strong desire;**Challenge—**difficult job;**Profoundly—**extreme;**Realise—**come to know;**Conceal—**hide;**Deafness—**inability to hear;**Deteriorate—**become worse;**Specialist—a**highly skilled person in a specific field;**Impair—**hinder;**Aid—**support;**Determine—**to be certain to do something;**Pursue—**follow;**Discouraged—**made somebody less confident;**Percussionist—**a player of a musical instrument;**Potential—**capacity;**Solo—**a piece of music for only one person; **Hectic—**very busy;**Intrigue—**secret plan;**Function—**work;**Effortlessly—**easily;**Especially—**used to point out one person, thing, or situation,**Flawlessly—**without stopping;**Tingle—**itching;**Fingertip—**the tip of a finger; **Surprisingly—**with surprise;**Delight-**great pleasure;**Audience—**a group of people gathered to watch/listen to a play;**Prestigious—**honoured; **Soloist—**a person who plays an instrument;**Extraordinary—**uncommon;**Confess—**accept;**Workaholic—**too much devoted to work;**Classical—**relating to ancient art;**Enormous—**too much, very big;**Concert—**musical performance;**Priority—**a thing regarded as more important than another;**Accomplish—**to achieve;**Handicapped—**physically or mentally disabled; **Pleasure—**happiness.

### ****l. Read the extract and answer the following:****

### ****PASSAGE 1****

She never looked back from that point onwards. She toured the United Kingdom with a youth orchestra and by the time she was sixteen, she had decided to make music her life. She auditioned for the Royal Academy of Music and scored one of the highest marks in the history of the academy. She gradually moved from orchestral work to solo performances. At the end of her three-year course, she had captured most of the top awards.

**Questions :**

**(1) Why did she tour the United Kingdom?**

**(ii) What did she decide to make her life?**

**(iii) What was her performance in the audition for the Royal Academy of Music?**

**(iv) From orchestra what did she decide to move?**

**(v) What was her performance during the course in the Royal Academy of Music**

**Answers :**

**(i)** With a young orchestra for giving music performances.

**(ii)** Music.

**(iii)** She scored the highest marks in them. history of the academy.

**(iv)** She decided to move to solo:

**(v)** She had captured most of the top awards.

### ****PASSAGE 2****

Not surprisingly, Evelyn delights her audiences. In 1991 she was presented with the Royal Philharmonic Society’s prestigious Soloist of the Year Award.”Says master percussionist James Blades, ‘God may have taken her hearing but he has given her back something extraordinary. What we hear, she feels—far more deeply than any of us. That is why she expresses music so beautifully.’

**Questions :**

**(I) How do Evelyn’s audiences feel?**

**(ii) What award did she win in 1991?**

**(iii) Who was James Blades?**

**(iv) The things what we hear, what does Evelyn do with them?**

**(v) How does she express her music?**

**Answers :**

**(i)** Her audiences feel delighted.

**(ii)** ‘Soloist of the Year Award’ by Philharmonic Society.

**(iii)** He was a master percussionist.

**(iv)** She feels them.

**(v)** She expresses her music beautifully.

**ll. SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (30 – 40 words each)**

**Q1. Which train was Evelyn waiting for on the underground train platform? How did she feel when she sensed the train approaching?**

**Ans.** On the underground train platform, Evelyn was waiting for a train to London where she was to join the prestigious Royal Academy for Music. As she sensed the train approaching, she felt both nervous and excited.

**Q2. How old was Evelyn when she went to the Royal Academy of Music? Why was she nervous on her way to the academy?                                                                                                                           (Textual)**

**Ans.** Evelyn was only seventeen years of age when she went to the Royal Academy of Music, London. Her nervousness was the result of her young age and lack of exposure. Coming from a  farmland in Scotland, she had not experienced much of the world. In addition, going to a big institute like The Royal Academy of Music with her hearing disability made her uneasy.

**Q3. While leaving for the Royal Academy of Music, why was Evelyn excited despite her nervousness?**

**Ans.** For Evelyn, going to the Royal Academy of Music, London was a dream come true. She was going to join a three-year course in an institute she had cherished to join. It excited her to think that despite her impaired hearing she had made her way to such a prestigious institute.

**Q4. How did Evelyn’s parents come to discover her deafness?**

**Ans.**Evelyn’s deafness was first noticed when she was eight years old. In fact, her mother had noticed it when Evelyn had not responded to a call for a performance on the piano. Her deafness was confirmed at the age of eleven when her poor academic performance forced her parents to consult a specialist, who discovered that her hearing was badly impaired because of gradual nerve damage. Q5. Why had Evelyn’s headmistress advised her parents to take her to a specialist? Evelyn managed to hide her growing deafness from students and teachers for some time. However, by the time she was eleven years old, her performance in school deteriorated and her marks decreased. It was then that the headmistress advised her parents to consult a specialist.

**Q6. What advice were the parents of Evelyn given once her deafness was confirmed?**

**Ans.** When the deafness of Evelyn was confirmed by a specialist, Evelyn’s parents were advised to get hearing aids for their daughter. They were also advised to send her to a special school where only deaf children were taught.

**Q7. “Everything suddenly looked black”. Why does Evelyn say so?**

**Ans.** When Evelyn was advised to use hearing aids and join the school for the deaf, she felt that her future was bleak and dark. She was depressed, as all hope for great achievements seemed to have vanished. She had now become a disabled child who could not have easy access to normal life.

**lll. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS**

**Q1. 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. She takes off her footwear on a wooden stage and the vibrations of the instruments pass from her bare feet into her legs. Thus, Evelyn has sensitized the different parts of her body to the different sounds of music.

**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?**

**Or**

**Which values of life strengthened Evelyn against the handicap of her deafness? What does her career teach to the handicapped people?**

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.

Her firm decisions, her sincere efforts, her passionate labour, and her untiring devotion to music are a source of inspiration for the people with challenges.