

## UNIT - 1

## PROSE

## His First Flight

- Liam O'Flaherty

## Public Exam Frequently Asked Questions

Answer the following questions in a sentence or two.

1. Why did the seagull fail to fly? (QY-'19, FRT-'22, May-'22)  
Ans: The seagull was **afraid** to fly. So he **failed** to fly.
2. What did the parents do, when the young seagull failed to fly? (FRT-'22)  
Ans: When the young seagull failed to fly, his parents **scolded** him and **threatened** to let him **starve** on the **ledge**.
3. What was the first catch of the young seagull's older brother? (PTA-5)  
Ans: The first catch of the young seagull's older brother was a **herring**.
4. What did the young bird do to seek the attention of his parents? (Sep-'21)  
Ans: The young bird **pretended** to fall asleep. Later, it uttered a **low cackle** to seek his parent's **attention**.
5. Did the mother bird offer any food to the young bird? (Aug-'22)  
Ans: No, the mother bird did not **offer** any food to the young bird.
6. How did the bird feel when it started flying for the first time? (FRT-'22)  
Ans: When the seagull started flying for the first time, a **monstrous terror** seized him for a moment but then he uttered a **joyful scream**.
7. How was the young seagull's first attempt to fly? (PTA-2)  
Ans: The young seagull tried to fly. But he was too **scared** to do so. His parents, brothers and sister persuaded him to fly. They also **motivated** him. But the young seagull felt that his wings would not support him.
8. How did the parents support and encourage the young seagull's brothers and sister? (PTA-4 & 5)  
Ans: The parents helped the young seagull's brothers and sister with the art of flying. They also taught them to **skim the waves** and how to **dive for fish**.
9. What prompted the young seagull to fly finally? (Govt. MQP; PTA-1; HY-'19, FRT-'22)  
Ans: His mother picked up a piece of fish and flew across to him with it. But then she halted, just opposite to him. She was almost within reach of his beak. Maddened by hunger, the young seagull dived at the fish. This act of his mother **prompted** the young seagull to fly finally.

## Paragraph Questions

Answer each of the following questions in a paragraph of about 100-150 words.

1. Describe the struggles underwent by the young seagull to overcome its fear of flying. (Govt. MQP; PTA-2, 4 & 5; QY. & HY-'19; Sep.'20, FRT & Aug-'22)  
Ans: The young seagull was afraid of flying. His parents tried their level best to teach the young seagull to fly. The parents, brothers and sister thought of a plan to teach him to fly. They flew away to another rock and left him alone. They did not give him anything to eat. He stood there on one leg and closed his eyes. He was very hungry. He searched for food everywhere. He even chewed the **dried pieces** of the eggshells. He saw his

mother tearing a piece of fish. He **begged** his mother to give him food. So the mother flew with the piece of fish to the young seagull. When she reached him, she became **motionless** in the air. She did not get down on the rock. She wanted to give the young seagull an **incentive** to fly. The seagull bent forward and jumped at the fish. He was very **frightened**. But he began to flap his wings to save himself.

2. **Do you think that the young bird's parents were really harsh to him? Justify your answer.** (FRT-'22)

**Ans :** No. I don't think that the parents were harsh to him. Parents are our first teachers. Guiding their children at every stage is their primary responsibility. If they fail to do this, the children cannot attain perfection. It is said that children start learning and responding even when they are in the womb of the mother. A child which grows, without the guidance of the parents, lack in the art of speech, walking, holding things, eating and even doing their day-to-day basic activities. Children need even toilet training. Here the young seagull's parents trained him to fly. The mother seagull showed a piece of fish to the hungry young seagull. Maddened by hunger, he dived at the fish and began to fly.

3. **Did the mother bird succeed in her attempt to make the young bird fly? How?** (FRT-'22)

**Ans :** The young seagull's first attempt to fly was a failure, because he was afraid to fly. He failed to muster up courage to fly. So he had to stay in his nest. He had no food. He could not find anything but the dried pieces of eggshell to eat. Then the mother seagull showed a piece of fish to the hungry young seagull. But he couldn't reach the food. Maddened by hunger, he dived at the fish. In order to grab it, he had no choice other than to flap his wings and fly towards his meal. He landed on the green sea and sank into it. He was floating on the water. The young birds' family was very happy and they offered him scraps of dog-fish for his first flight. Thus the mother bird, his natural bird instinct and his urge for survival prompted him to fly, finally.

4. **What message does the author Liam O Flaherty convey in this lesson to his readers?** (FRT-'22)

**Ans :** 'His First Flight' by Liam O' Flaherty tells about the need for courage and self-confidence to overcome fears in life. A young seagull looked desperately at the vast expanse of water that stretched before him. His parents, brothers and little sister had flown away and left him alone on the rock. He was afraid and felt that his wings would not support him. Despite making countless efforts his parents could not persuade him to make an attempt to fly. He was starving and felt that he would die if he did not get any food. He saw his mother tearing a piece of fish with her beak. When he cried out to her she just screamed back mockingly. Then he saw his mother approaching him with food and was very happy. His mother flew upward and he started falling. He was terrified for a moment but then he realized that he was flying. In this way he made his first flight.

5. **Explain the experience of the young seagull in "His First Flight" written by Liam O'Flaherty** (May-'22)

**Ans :** 'His first flight' is a parable. The seagulls convey the message of self-confidence, motivation and self-reliance. The mother seagull motivates the young one enough to get him to learn flying. The young seagull realises the importance of belief and faith. He flaps his wings to learn flying and gain the confidence to be independent. The story conveys "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime". The parable also stresses the importance of family ties and devoted support. It tells about the painful process of learning an important lesson in life.

