

Literature

Unit 3.3 What I Require from Life (Essays)

Class 11 English Exercise

J.B.S. Haldane

About Author/Writer

- Name: John Burdon Sanderson Haldane
- Lived between 1892 – 1964
- A British Indian Scientist
- Joined British Army and served during World War I
- A professed socialist, Marxist atheist, and humanist
- His political dissent led him to leave England in 1956 and lived in India becoming a naturalized Indian Citizen
- Major works include Daedalus Animal Biology etc.
- Founder of diabetes Darwinism.

Main Summary

J.B.S. Haldane is a social critic who has presented his idea about socialism. He used the mode of narrative writing to present his personal opinion with his personal story of his life and the heroic age.

According to him, although he was born in peaceful age but during his youth, due to the outbreak of the first world war, he had to involved himself in a heroic age of war. Later, he put forward his opinion related to his requirement to make his living best. According to him, his major requirements are described below.

Work:

It is Haldane's first requirement. He wants every healthy people at work in the entire world with a decent wage. Capitalism provides unemployment in the time of depression. Here, he represents the time frame of war when there are economic crises, and it's the time people need work and money. Similarly, he wants industries

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to be controlled by workers so that they can see the fruits of their work not profit for others but in friends well being.

Freedom:

Freedom is his second requirement. He wants more freedom of speech because the state's law stops him from speaking a lot. As a socialist, he has to speak more than others and he has to speak more than others and he needs to advocate equality and criticize the drawbacks of the present situation.

Health:

Health is the third requirement because he believes that a healthy citizen can bring a remarkable change in society. So he wants to be healthy enough to be fit for work and it is possible only with the fulfillment of food, housing, and medical attendance to everyone.

Friendship:

It's the fourth requirement. Being living in a society everyone needs friends and colleagues in any scientific and political work. He wants society with quality and could be criticized equally to all.
(Below are Minor requirements)

Adventure and thrill:

It also belongs to writers' needs. According to him the adventure of life will be useless without the risk factors. He means to describe it as he wants to involve himself in such adventurous work which can bring change in the life of people.

Desire and demands:

Here, according to the writer demand is something that we desire for or it must have. So desire is not the requirement but demand is more essential. Although he was fulfilled with all his desire but still unhappy with lacking essential things.

Peace and security:

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Peace and security are also part of his requirements; which is not present in this modern life. World War has destroyed peace, harmony, and security. Everythings were destroyed by fascism by Hitler and Mussolini. There is no fraternity, equality, and development without peace and security.

So by presenting all these requirements at last he wishes or desires to die as Socrates. Socrates dies at the age of 70 for his convictions. he willingly drank the cup of poison and died very happily. He desires the death of Socrates if not at least fulfilling his two conditions.

What I Require from Life – Complete Exercise

Understanding the text

Answer the following questions.

a. How does the writer distinguish between a peaceful age and a heroic age?

Answer: The writer distinguishes between a peaceful age and a heroic age by making a comparison between them. He recalls his birth time a peaceful age and the time of 1914, when the First World War took place as heroic age.

b. Why does the writer want more freedom of speech than most people?

Answer: The writer wants more freedom of speech than most people to express and explain what he feels about the society. He wants freedom of speech to tell the public about the issues like medicines, newspapers and drinks do not maintain quality.

c. According to the writer, what are the four general human needs?

Answer: According to the writer the four general human needs are work, freedom of speech, health and friendship.

d. What is the difference between desire and demand according to the writer?

Answer: According to the writer the difference between desire and

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demand is that the demand is related with the basic needs of life like food, clothes and shelter but desire includes things which improve living standard. The writer talks about car, garden, bathing pool and nearby beach as desires.

e. Why does the writer demand security?

Answer: The writer demands security because it is an important need for a person to live a happy life. He lived in the age of war and chaos due to which the lives of many peoples was in risk. So he demands security.

Reference to the context

Explain the following lines with reference to the context:

a. “The satisfaction of adventure is something much more solid than a thrill.”

Answer: The author believes that adventure is not only about emotions, but also about satisfaction in performing a creative activity. It enriches people with solid experience. He compares thrill with amusement he has got from reading Rimbaud’s poetry. He served on the war front in Madrid for six months and looked forward to read a book of Rimbaud’s poetry for a thrill.

b. “I want the workers to see the fruit of their own work not in profits for others, but in their own and their friends’ well-being.”

Answer: The line shows the writer’s support for socialism. He asserts the hardworking should be rewarded directly to a considerable extent. He wants democracy within the working environment. He is a socialist who wants industry to be controlled by the workers. They should be free to work and share profit among themselves too. He compares the nature of industrial work with hunting and gardening like of paleolithic and neolithic. To create an even and pleasing working atmosphere the profits of work should remain among working people.

c. Why do you think the essayist has taken reference from the ancient philosophers?

Answer: I think the essayist has taken reference from the ancient

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philosopher like Aristotle, Lord Blam, Mr. Dash, and Sir John Asterisk to support his ideas and convince the readers about his idea of decent work and death.

d. Discuss the essay in terms of its language, purpose, subject, point of view and mode of writing.

Answer: The language is simple and lucid in the essay. Haldane's style is typically straight forward and vigorous. As a science popularizer, he is accustomed to write about complex matters in a simple language so that any reader can understand. Here, when writing on a non-technical subject, he retains this simplicity, with short, forceful, declarative sentences and clear explanations.

His subject at first appears to be personal and thus made of writing descriptive. However, in the second part of his essay, it becomes clear that he is putting forward a political argument freedom, for instance not merely a personal preference of Haldane's but a universal requirement. This means that society should be structured in such a way as to maximize freedom for everyone.

His viewpoint is that of a social critic, setting forth a general program of the principles that should underlie to a civilized society.

Reference beyond the text

a. What do you require from your life to be happy and satisfied?

Answer: I require good health, a job, friendship, freedom & security from my life to be happy and satisfied.

b. What is socialism? How is it different from capitalism?

Answer: Socialism is a system of social and economic equality in which private property and ownership are not prioritized. It differs from capitalism because capitalism does not provide economic equality. Unlike socialism, capitalism ignores people's needs and does not promote equal opportunity.

c. Write an essay about your dream house.

Answer:

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My Dream House

My dream house is an ideal house that I always imagine. House becomes home when we pour love to our family members. It is a place where different generation live together in a single bond. So, my dream house will be full of love and happiness.

I always dream of a mountainous wooden home. My ideal home should be facing a river. Through the windows, I could watch the mountains sunset and vanish. It should be facing East direction because I want to enjoy cool air as well as rising sun view. My ideal home would include a little garden with my own veggies and fruits.

I would like to maintain my house neat and clean. There will be a meditation room for myself to do Yoga and meditation. I will also make one library room for my family and visitors. I will make a special room for my parents and visitors. I won't add too much amenities in my dream house because it creates laziness. I believe that physical exercises are necessary to be healthy and fit. There will be solar panel in my house to maintain regular light. I will also add a big smart TV for my parents and visitors. My house's wall will be decorated with beautiful wall paintings capturing nature's true beauty. I also have a 1 year old pet dog named Puppy. I also want a modest but cozy area in Puppy's home where he may sleep and rest when he gets old.

My dream home is a place of joy, peace and beauty. Right now it exists only in my dreams. But someday, it will become a reality.

THE END

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