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LET'S TALK EMPOWERMENT. LET'S TALK ENGLISH

# Beehive

## 8. Reach for the Top

### Part I

### Santosh Yadav

#### 1. Summary

Santosh Yadav was born into a traditional family in a small village in Haryana. She was the only sister, and had five elder brothers. She lived life on her own terms from the start. She preferred wearing shorts instead of traditional dresses. She refused to get married at 16 like the other girls, and persuaded her parents to send her to school in Delhi. Then she went onto college in Jaipur. She stayed at "Kasturba Hostel" which faced the Aravalli hills. As she watched the villagers and mountaineers go up and down the hills, she developed an interest in climbing. She saved money and signed up for a course at Uttarkashi's Nehru Institute of Mountaineering.

Her climbing skills improved rapidly and, in 1992, at the age of 20, Santosh Yadav climbed Mount Everest, becoming the youngest woman in the world to do so. She said "I unfurled the Indian tricolour and held it aloft on the roof of the world. The feeling is indescribable. The Indian flag was flying on top of the world. It was truly a spiritual moment. I felt proud as an Indian."

She is the only woman to have achieved this feat twice. In recognition of her achievements, she was awarded the Padmashri by the Indian Government.

Watch this video for snapshots from the life of Santosh Yadav. Click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAcQh67cK8I>

Watch this National Geographic video about climbing Mt. Everest. Click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFkC7Cd9-IE>

## 2. Vocabulary

1. **Idolise** – to admire and respect someone very much  
Most of the young cricket players **idolise** Sachin Tendulkar.
2. **Achievements** – something very good and difficult that you have succeeded in doing  
We are all very proud of the **achievements** of Indians in the field of Information Technology (IT).
3. **Sphere of life** – area of work and life  
In any **sphere of life** it is important to work hard and try to reach the top.
4. **Scaled** – to climb up a high wall, steep cliff, etc.  
The prisoner **scaled** the high prison wall and escaped.
5. **Blessing** – something that is extremely lucky or makes you happy; also a request by a priest, holy man or elder for God to take care of a particular person  
I bent down to touch my grandmother's feet and to ask for her **blessings**.
6. **Curse** – words expressing a wish that something terrible will happen to somebody  
Inflation is a **curse** and burden on the economy of the country.
7. **Assumed** – to accept something to be true without question or proof  
The teacher **assumed** that all the students had understood the lesson.
8. **Nevertheless** – despite what has been said or referred to  
The driver drove carefully, but the accident took place **nevertheless**.
9. **Destiny** – things that happen to you in your life which you cannot control  
Santosh's **destiny** was to become a mountaineer.
10. **Contentment** – a feeling of happy satisfaction  
People can find peace and **contentment** by living simply.
11. **Traditional** – a custom or belief that continues from the past to the present  
The sari is a **traditional** dress worn by Indian women.
12. **Determined** – having firmly decided to do something  
The police officer was **determined** to find the killer.

13. **Rational** – based on reason, sensible or logical  
We need to talk calmly and take a **rational** decision.
14. **Affluent** – having a lot of money  
Her clothes and jewellery show that she belongs to an **affluent** family.
15. **In line with** – following or in accordance with  
The company's results are **in line with** the stock market expectations.
16. **Prevailing** – existing or most common at a given time  
The **prevailing** panic increases the risk of spreading the disease.
17. **The last thing** – the least important thing  
**The last thing** you need is to fall ill just before your exams.
18. **Threatened to** – seemed likely to do something unpleasant  
She **threatened** to quit if they didn't raise her salary.
19. **Enrolled** – signed up or registered  
Asif **enrolled** in a Medical College after he finished school.
20. **Urge** – a strong wish, especially one that is difficult to control  
Sheila had a strong **urge** to have ice-cream in the middle of the night.
21. **Vanishing** – to disappear suddenly  
Sparrows have started **vanishing** from our country.
22. **Check it out** – find out the truth  
When you want to listen to music, you can **check it out** online.
23. **Mountaineers** – a person who climbs mountains as a sport or job  
The **mountaineers** train for months before climbing any mountain peak in the Himalayas.
24. **Affirmative** – yes or in agreement  
I asked Sahil if he was planning to leave school, he replied in the **affirmative**.
25. **Motivate** – make somebody want to do something  
Our new teacher knows how to **motivate** his students.
26. **Headed straight for** – went towards  
I **headed straight for** the washroom to wash my hands after coming back from the hospital.

27. **Permission** – allowing to do something  
She was given **permission** to leave school early so that she could prepare for the competition.
28. **Expedition** – an organised journey for a particular purpose  
The scientists are going on an **expedition** to Antarctica to study the melting of the ice cap there.
29. **Matured** – to have become completely grown and developed  
The young boy has **matured** into a responsible man.
30. **Resistance** – act of fighting against something that is attacking you, or refusing to accept something  
The whole community had developed a **resistance** to the disease.
31. **Altitude** – height above sea level  
Mountaineers use oxygen when they reach higher **altitudes**.
32. **Equipped** – having the necessary tools, clothes, equipment, etc.  
The hospital was not **equipped** to handle so many patients.
33. **Physical endurance** – the physical ability to keep doing something difficult, unpleasant or painful for a long time  
Swimming across the channel was a test of **physical endurance**.
34. **Culmination** – to reach the highest point, to arrive at a final stage  
The joint space mission was the **culmination** of years of research and planning.
35. **Impressed** – caused someone to admire or respect you  
The teachers were very **impressed** by the hard work and intelligence of the boy.
36. **Unfortunately** – something is sad, disappointing or has a bad effect  
**Unfortunately**, we could not win the game.
37. **Unsuccessful** – not achieving the hoped for result, not successful  
Ramesh was **unsuccessful** in getting the job.
38. **Unique** – unusual or special in some way; only existing one of its type  
His handwriting is unique - I will be able to recognise it immediately.

39. **Annals** – history or historical records  
The conquest of India by Babar will go down as an important event in the **annals** of history.
40. **Recognition** – the act of praising someone or rewarding someone for something they have done  
In **recognition** of the hard work put in by her, she was awarded by the President on Teachers' Day.
41. **Bestowed** – to give something as an honour or present  
The prize for the Best Student of the Year was **bestowed** on Ashraf.
42. **Top honours** – highest awards  
Mother Teresa was awarded the **top honour** of our country, the Bharat Ratna, for her humanitarian work.
43. **The enormity of the moment** – a very great moment  
I only realised the **enormity of the moment** after I had received the prize from the President and returned to my seat.
44. **Sink in** – be understood  
Only after some time did it **sink in** that she wanted me to help her with her homework.
45. **Held it aloft** – held it high  
After the trophy was awarded to the team, the captain **held it aloft** for all to see.
46. **Indescribable** – impossible to describe, especially because of being extremely good or bad  
The moon rising over the horizon painted a scene of **indescribable** beauty.
47. **Spiritual** – relating to deep feelings and beliefs, especially religious beliefs.  
Praying early in the morning fills me with **spiritual** peace and happiness.
48. **Fervent** – having strong and sincere feelings  
My **fervent** prayers were answered when my mother recovered from a serious illness.
49. **Environmentalist** – a person who is interested in and studies nature and tries to protect it from being damaged by human activities  
The **environmentalist** said that cutting down the forest to build a factory would harm the animals and tribal people living there.

### 3. Questions

I. Answer these questions in one or two sentences each. (The paragraph numbers within brackets provide clues to the answers.)

1. Why was the 'holy man' who gave Santosh's mother his blessings surprised? (1)
2. Give an example to show that even as a young girl Santosh was not ready to accept anything unreasonable. (2)
3. Why was Santosh sent to the local school? (3)
4. When did she leave home for Delhi, and why? (4)  
At the age of sixteen, she left home for Delhi in search of a proper education.
5. Why did Santosh's parents agree to pay for her schooling in Delhi? What mental qualities of Santosh are brought into light by this incident? (4)

II. Answer each of these questions in a short paragraph (about 30 words).

1. How did Santosh begin to climb mountains?
2. What incidents during the Everest expedition show Santosh's concern for her team-mates?
3. What shows her concern for the environment?
4. How does she describe her feelings at the summit of the Everest?
5. Santosh Yadav got into the record books both times she scaled Mt Everest. What were the reasons for this?

III. Complete the following statements.

1. From her room in Kasturba Hostel, Santosh used to \_\_\_\_\_.
2. When she finished college, Santosh had to write a letter of apology to her father because \_\_\_\_\_.

3. During the Everest expedition, her seniors in the team admired her for her \_\_\_\_\_, while \_\_\_\_\_ endeared her to fellow climbers.

IV. Pick out words from the text that mean the same as the following words or expressions. (Look in the paragraphs indicated.)

1. took to be true without proof (1): \_\_\_\_\_
2. based on reason; sensible; reasonable (2): \_\_\_\_\_
3. the usual way of doing things (3): \_\_\_\_\_
4. a strong desire arising from within (5): \_\_\_\_\_
5. the power to endure, without falling ill (7): \_\_\_\_\_

## Part II

# Maria Sharapova

### 1. Summary

This story is about a Russian girl, Maria Sharapova, and her journey to become the number one in Women's tennis at the age of 18. She rose to the top through hard work, rigorous training and a lot of sacrifices.

She was taken to the US as a 9- year- old to stay with her father who worked hard to fund her training. She had to stay away from her mother for 2 years. She was lonely but worked very hard to achieve her goals. She won the Women's Singles Crown at Wimbledon in 2004 and the World No.1 spot the next year.

Her mantra for success was hard work and determination to succeed. Like any teenager, she was fond of dancing, singing and fashion. She was always a true Russian at heart and was willing to represent the country at the Olympics. She believed that money did play a part in her ambition, but her main aim was always to be No.1.

Learn a little more about her life by watching this video. Click on the link below.

<https://youtu.be/cM1xZPaAJR8>

### 2. Vocabulary

1. **Summit** – the highest point  
Virat Kohli reached the **summit** of his cricket career at a young age.
2. **Comparison** – the act of finding out the similarities or differences between two or more people or things  
Her brother is so tall that she looks tiny in **comparison**.
3. **Disarming** – getting rid of suspicion or hostility using charm  
He had such a **disarming** smile, even his eyes twinkled.
4. **Glamorous** – exciting, attractive  
She wore a **glamorous** black gown for the fashion show.

5. **Attire** – clothes that you wear  
Her **attire** was not suitable for a wedding.
6. **Poised** – self-confident, dignified  
The bride looked **poised** and beautiful during her wedding ceremony
7. **Professional** – relating to a job that needs special training or education  
The electrician was very **professional** and solved her problem in ten minutes.
8. **Pinnacle** – the top; most important or successful part of something  
Akshay Kumar rose from a very humble beginning and reached the **pinnacle** of success.
9. **Rapid** – happening or moving very quickly  
India's economy has shown **rapid** growth in the last few years.
10. **Ascent** – advance in social status or reputation  
Narendra Modi's **ascent** to power was very rapid.
11. **Fiercely** – in a powerful/ violent way, extremely aggressive  
The two boxers glared **fiercely** at each other.
12. **Competitive** – involving competition; wanting to win or be more successful than other people  
Arjun is very **competitive** and always wants to win in any game.
13. **Sacrifice** – the act of giving up something  
My mother had to **sacrifice** her career to bring us up.
14. **Endure** – to suffer something difficult, unpleasant or painful  
She has had to endure a lot of pain as the medicines are not working.
15. **Celebrated** – famous  
Raj Kapoor was a **celebrated** actor and film maker.
16. **Packed off** – send someone away  
During the holidays the children were all **packed off** to the village to spend time with their grandparents.

17. **Launched** – began an important activity  
The rocket carrying the satellite was **launched** from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
18. **Stardom** – the quality of being very famous for acting, singing, etc.  
Deepika Padukone is enjoying the fruits of **stardom**.
19. **Heart-wrenching** – extremely sad or distressing  
The spread of COVID-19 all over the world is **heart-wrenching**.
20. **Separation** – the act of separating or being separated  
The little child could not bear the pain of **separation** from her mother and kept crying constantly.
21. **Compelled** – to force somebody to do something  
Divya was **compelled** by her traditional family to get married while she was still at school.
22. **Restrictions** – action of limiting the freedom of somebody  
The permit allows you to travel anywhere without **restrictions**.
23. **Excellence** – very good, or of a very high quality  
Sunita can speak English **excellently**.
24. **Depress** – make someone feel very unhappy  
The news of her cousin's accident **depressed** her.
25. **Determined** – having firmly decided to do something  
The Government is **determined** to tackle inflation.
26. **Mentally tough** – strong in mind; able to handle difficulties  
The boy was **mentally tough** and continued to work hard in spite of all his money problems.
27. **Quitting** – leave your job or school permanently  
Even though my boss was very unfair to me, I never thought of **quitting** my job.

28. **Insults** – to say or do something to someone that is rude and offensive  
Her brother showered **insults** on her, in front of her friends.
29. **Humiliation** – feeling of being shamed or embarrassed or disgraced  
The vote of no confidence was the final **humiliation** for the Government.
30. **Steadfastly** – firmly, with conviction  
She **steadfastly** supported women's rights.
31. **Pursue** – to achieve something or do an activity, usually over a period of time; to follow someone or something  
He went to the United States of America to pursue his studies.
32. **Toughness** – the quality of being strong and not easily broken or damaged  
There is a certain **toughness** in her that makes her win, despite all the problems.
33. **Bagging** – getting something before others can get it  
The company was successful in **bagging** a very large order.
34. **Meteoric** – very fast or successful  
Maithili Thakur shot to **meteoric** popularity as a singer.
35. **Frozen** – very cold, turned into ice  
At the north and south poles, the ground is **frozen** throughout the year.
36. **Sentiment** – a way of thinking or feeling about something  
We must respect her **sentiments** and plan a simple wedding.
37. **Ambition** – a strong wish to achieve something  
Her **ambition** is to become a doctor and serve humanity.
38. **Amplify** – more than enough  
It is **amplify** clear that he does not want to help us in any way.
39. **Mantra** – a word or expression or action that is used repeatedly  
The only **mantra** for success is hard work and discipline.
40. **Pronounced** – very noticeable or certain  
Her **pronounced** good looks won her the part of the heroine in the play.

41. **American accent** – speaking in the way that people in America do  
After staying in New York for twenty years, she spoke with a distinct **American accent**.
42. **Proudly parades** – shows everyone with great pride  
Sushil's mother **proudly parades** all her children's achievements whenever we visit her.
43. **Nationality** – the official right to belong to a particular country  
I am very proud of my Indian **nationality**.
44. **Citizenship** – the state of being a member of a particular country and having rights because of it  
After living in England for many years he took up **citizenship** of the United Kingdom.
45. **Sensation** – someone or something that causes great excitement  
The musical **sensation**, Shreya Ghoshal, came to our college to give a performance.
46. **Sophisticated** – having a good knowledge of culture and fashion  
Irena was far more **sophisticated** than her sister.
47. **Pancakes** – thin flat round cake made from a mixture of flour, milk and eggs, fried on both sides  
I love to eat **pancakes** for breakfast.
48. **Chocolate spread** – a soft chocolate flavoured food, used for putting on biscuits, bread, pancakes, etc.  
She covered her toast with **chocolate spread** and ate it with great satisfaction.
49. **Fizzy orange drink** – drink with orange taste and lots of bubbles, because of carbon dioxide dissolved in it, for e.g. Fanta  
The little children were enjoying their **fizzy orange drinks**.
50. **Pigeon-holed** - put into a particular category  
Shahrukh Khan has been **pigeon-holed** as a romantic movie star.
51. **Categorised** – to put people or things into groups with the same feature  
It is very difficult to **categorise** this actor as a commercial film actor or an art film actor.

52. **Unwavering** – not changing or becoming weaker  
She was encouraged by the **unwavering** support of her family.
53. **Desire** – to want something, especially strongly  
Her heart's **desire** was to own a diamond necklace.
54. **Readiness** – willingness, or a state of being prepared for something  
Everything was kept in **readiness** for the operation and the accident victim was immediately taken to the operation theatre.
55. **Grudge** – unfriendly feelings towards somebody, because you are angry about what has happened in the past  
It was an accident and I do not bear a **grudge** against him.
56. **Reaping** – enjoying the benefits of the situation  
My brother is now **reaping** the rewards of the hard work he put in when he was young.
57. **Monetary gains** – money earned or obtained  
The **monetary gains** from this business are very poor.
58. **Motivation** – enthusiasm for doing something  
My aunt was the main **motivation** behind my wanting to become a nurse.

### 3. Questions

#### 1. Match the following.

<i>something disarming at odds with</i>	<i>quickly, almost immediately</i>
<i>glamorous attire</i>	<i>more calm, confident and in control than people of her age usually are</i>
<i>in almost no time</i>	<i>in contrast to; not agreeing with</i>
<i>poised beyond her years</i>	<i>something that makes you feel friendly, taking away your suspiciousness</i>
<i>packed off</i>	<i>sent off</i>
<i>launched</i>	<i>attractive and exciting clothes</i>
<i>heart wrenching</i>	<i>causing strong feelings of sadness</i>
	<i>started</i>

2. As you read, look for the answers to these questions.

(i) Why was Maria sent to the United States?

(ii) Why didn't her mother go with her?

(iii) What are her hobbies? What does she like?

(iv) What motivates her to keep going?

3. Working in small groups of 4–5 students, go back over the two passages on Santosh Yadav and Maria Sharapova and complete the table given below with relevant phrases or sentences.

<i>Points of Comparison/ Contrast</i>	<i>Santosh Yadav</i>	<i>Maria Sharapova</i>
1. Their humble beginning		
2. Their parents' approach		
3. Their will power and strong desire to succeed		
4. Evidence of their mental toughness		
5. Their patriotism		

#### 4. Grammar

Look at the following sentences. They each have two clauses, or two parts each with their own subject and verb or verb phrase. Often, one part (*italicised*) tells us when or why something happened

- I reached the market *when most of the shops had closed*. (Tells us *when I reached*.)
- *When Rahul Dravid walked back towards the pavilion*, everyone stood up. (Tells us *when everyone stood up*.)
- The telephone rang *and Ganga picked it up*. (Tells us *what happened next*.)
- Gunjan has been with us *ever since the school began*. (Tells us *for how long he has been with us*.)

**I. Identify the two parts in the sentences below by underlining the part that gives us the information in brackets, as shown above.**

- 1. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts.(Contrasts her dress with that of others)**
- 2. She left home and got herself enrolled in a school in Delhi. (Tells us what happened after the first action.)**
- 3. She decided to fight the system when the right moment arrived. (Tells us when she was going to fight the system.)**
- 4. Little Maria had not yet celebrated her tenth birthday when she was packed off to train in the United States. (Tells us when Maria was sent to the U.S.)**

**II. Now rewrite the pairs of sentences given below as one sentence.**

- 1. Grandfather told me about the old days. All books were printed on paper then.**
- 2. What do you do after you finish the book? Perhaps you just throw it away.**
- 3. He gave the little girl an apple. He took the computer apart.**
- 4. You have nothing. That makes you very determined.**
- 5. I never thought of quitting. I knew what I wanted.**

## 5. Dictation

Read the passage once. Then close your books. Your teacher will dictate the story to you. Write it down with the correct punctuation and paragraphing.

### *The Raincoat*

After four years of drought, in a small town in the Northeast, the Vicar gathered everyone together for a pilgrimage to the mountain, where they would pray together and ask for the rain to return.

The priest noticed a boy in the group wearing a raincoat.

“Have you gone mad?” he asked. “It hasn’t rained in this region for five years, the heat will kill you climbing the mountain.”

“I have a cold, father. If we are going to ask God for rain, can you imagine the way back from the mountain? It’s going to be such a down pour that I need to be prepared.”

At that moment a great crash was heard in the sky and the first drops began to fall. A boy’s faith was enough to bring about a miracle that not even those most prepared, truly believed in.

(translated by James Mulholland)

## 6. Speaking

Imagine that you are Santosh Yadav, or Maria Sharapova. You have been invited to speak at an All India Girls’ Athletic Meet, as chief guest. Prepare a short speech to motivate the girls to think and dream big and make an effort to fulfill their dreams, not allowing difficulties or defeat to discourage them. The following words and phrases may help you.

- self-confident/ confidence/ sure of yourself
- self-assured/ assurance/ belief in yourself
- morale/ boost morale/ raise morale
- giving somebody a boost/ fillip/ lift
- demoralising/ unsure of yourself/ insecure/ lack confidence

Please do watch this video, it will give you a lot of the answers to this question regarding Maria Sharapova. Click on the link below.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJDDHfV11\\_I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJDDHfV11_I)

## 7. Writing

Working in pairs, go through the table below that gives you information about the top women tennis players since 1975. Write a short article for your school magazine comparing and contrasting the players in terms of their duration at the top. Mention some qualities that you think may be responsible for their brief or long stay at the top spot.

### *Top-Ranked Women Players*

- I. The roll of honour of women who enjoyed life at the summit since everybody's favourite player, Chris Evert, took her place in 1975.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Ranked on</i>	<i>Weeks as No. 1</i>
Maria Sharapova (Russia)	22 August 2005	1
Lindsay Davenport (U.S.)	October 2004	82
Amelie Mauresmo (France)	13 September 2004	5
Justine Henin-Hardenne (Belgium)	20 October 2003	45
Kim Clijsters (Belgium)	11 August 2003	12
Serena Williams (U.S.)	8 July 2002	57
Venus Williams (U.S.)	25 February 2002	11
Jennifer Capriati	15 October 2001	17
Lindsay Davenport (U.S.)	12 October 1998	82
Martina Hingis (Switzerland)	31 March 1997	209
Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain)	6 February 1995	12
Monica Seles (U.S.)	11 March 1991	178
Steffi Graf (Germany)	17 August 1987	377
Tracy Austin (U.S.)	7 April 1980	22
Martina Navratilova (U.S.)	10 July 1978	331
Chris Evert (U.S.)	3 November 1975	362

- II. Which of these words would you use to describe Santosh Yadav? Find reasons in the text to support your choices, and write a couple of paragraphs describing Santosh's character.**

**contented determined resourceful polite adventurous considerate  
weak-willed fearful independent pessimist patient persevering**