

BEFORE YOU READ

What is Virtual Reality?

‘Virtual reality’ is a term that applies to computer simulated environments that can simulate physical presence in places in the real world as well as in imaginary worlds. Users can interact with a virtual environment either through the use of standard devices like keyboard and mouse or through wired gloves, as is seen in this story. Virtual reality can be for two purposes :

- ◆ The simulation of a real environment for training and education.
- ◆ The development of an imagined environment for a game or interactive activity.

In this lesson, two boys remote from each other, interact in strange manner, without actually meeting and manage to create miracles.

कहानी पढ़ने से पहले

“लगभग सच ही” क्या है?

यह पदबंध, कम्प्यूटर से किसी व्यक्ति-वस्तु की शकल या आकार लेने के लिए प्रयोग किया जाता है। यह वास्तविक और काल्पनिक दोनों जगत में प्रयोग किया जा सकता है। इस सेवा के उपभोक्ता, एक दूसरे से मेल-जोल, एक लगभग सत्य से सम्पर्क, की बोर्ड और माउस द्वारा अथवा तार के दस्तानों से कर सकते हैं। ‘लगभग सत्य ही’ शब्द के प्रयोग करने के दो कारण हैं।

- प्रशिक्षण और शिक्षा के लिए एक वास्तविक वातावरण बनाने के लिए।
- एक काल्पनिक वातावरण का रूप धारण करना, किसी खेल अथवा आपसी सम्पर्क के विकास के लिए।

SUMMARY

The narrator is a young boy, who is travelling by train. His attention is attracted by a big woman, sitting opposite, reading a newspaper. The headline and the cover-story was regarding a 14-year-old school boy named Sebastian Shultz, who awoke from a coma that the doctors feared would last forever. The story further elaborated that Sebastian had been injured in a motorway accident and did not regain consciousness. The mother of Sebastian hoped that their son would get out of coma, but only a miracle could save him. The narrator sees the boy’s photograph also and he is shocked to discover, it is the same Sebastian whom he had got to know. But the newspaper story stated that the boy had been in coma throughout. The narrator felt nervous and confused. He couldn’t figure out how could this have happened.

It all started a month back, when the narrator along with his Dad had brought the latest psycho-drive games with a virtual reality, visor and glove. Some of these games didn’t appear new but the narrator was not bothered. He was thrilled with the latest technology and was getting impatient to start playing.

The first game that he started was called Wild West.

The game made him feel that he was also one of the characters and he had a Sheriff’s badge pinned on his shirt. As he burst into the swing doors of the saloon, everyone glared at him. He drank a glass of some fizzy red stuff and on hearing a loud crash, he spun around. There in the doorway was Black-Eyed Jed, with the fastest gun in the west. He called the narrator who was Sheriff Dawson out. The narrator slammed the glass down and went out. Surprisingly the game took a strange and unexpected turn. A second Sheriff appeared through the back door, shouting and waving. The narrator wondered what way the game was shaping. The second Sheriff forbade the narrator from going out. The narrator noticed that he was very different from other computer images. He was young, like the narrator and he did not move like other images. The second Sheriff told the narrator to follow him. They raced down a corridor, through another door, then another and ended back in the saloon itself. The second sheriff dived through the window and the narrator followed him. He was sitting on a horse and the narrator sat behind him. There were other men on horse back chasing them. The sound of a gunshot shocked the narrator and he realised that the second Sheriff had collapsed. Immediately bright neon lights appeared and score ‘GAME OVER’. As the

narrator took out his visor, he noticed a piece of paper on the tray.

It carried a picture of the second Sheriff with the message.” I’m stuck. Please help to retrieve me. Try Dragon Quest”. — Sebastian Shultz.

Next morning, the narrator started playing the game of DRAGON QUEST. The aim of the game was to rescue a golden haired princess Aurora from the wicked dragon and also to collect the dragon’s treasure on the way. The narrator was on the verge of saving the princess, when he is stalled by Sebastian’s voice in the background, asking to be saved first. Sebastian was the second knight this time and he cut off the golden plaits of the princess, made them into a rope and jumped out. The narrator also jumped out. They tried to run through a secret passage with the dragon pursuing them. They take to the dungeons later and then the dragon suddenly appeared and jumped on them. The narrator tries to strike him but is not successful. The dragon only charged towards Sebastian, who was his prime target. Before the narrator could do anything to save Sebastian, the game got over. This time the message in the printer was ‘BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME. OTHERWISE I’LL HAVE TO STAY HERE FOREVER. TRY JAILBREAK. I THINK IT MIGHT WORK”.

The narrator had no need to study the rules of the game JAILBREAK. He knew his sole objective to save Sebastian. His cellmate in the games was prisoner: 02478 : Shultz. With the help of a skeleton swipe-card, they both were out of the cell, with dogs chasing and sirens wailing. They manage to evade the guards and reach the roof. Sebastian is waiting for a helicopter to rescue them. But by that time the guards and dogs were hurtling towards them and before the narrator could do anything, Sebastian had taken a step backwards and landed on the concrete below. The game ended there and then, much to the shock of the narrator. This time, the narrator was shocked to discover that there was no message from Sebastian. The narrator ran through all the three games over and over again, but he couldn’t find Sebastian again. Then one day a message was there, “CAN WE HAVE LAST ONE TRY ... HELICOPTER WAS NOT A GOOD IDEA... THERE’S GOT TO BE SOME ACCIDENT TRY WARZONE. IF THIS DOES NOT WORK I WON’T BOTHER YOU AGAIN”. CHEERS. SEB.

The narrator tried WARZONE. He was facing a city with tall buildings. Machine guns were firing, bombs were exploding but the narrator was clear that Sebastian and he had to reach the helicopter in one piece. They ran to a no man’s land, got into a waiting jeep started the engine. A tank was speeding towards them. Sebastian slammed the brakes all of a sudden, the jeep went into a spin and the

narrator jumped into the helicopter. But Sebastian was not there, he could not get out of the jeep and the jeep had crashed with the tank. Sebastian was thrown out and landed near the helicopter with a great thud. The narrator could not see anything because of the dust and the game got over. When he removed the visor, he had scored 40,000,000 points and realised that he had cracked the game.

The narrator wanted now to cross-check the facts. He got out of the train and surfed the net for some details. He found out what he was looking for. Apparently at the time of the accident, Sebastian was using his lap-top to play one of the psycho-drive games that the narrator had bought. The narrator realised that Sebastian’s memory had been stored on disk because the computer had saved Sebastian’s memory as its run, when Sebastian had banged his head in the accident. But how did it end up in the narrator’s computer. This was also solved later because the narrator came to know that when Sebastian had been in the hospital, someone had stolen the games and sold them. And the narrator had ended up buying them. There was a message from Sebastian that said, “DEAR MICHAEL, THANK YOU. I’M NOT SURE HOW IT HAPPENED. BUT YOU SAVED MY LIFE. LET’S MEET UP SOON, CHEERS. SEB. PL. KEEP THE GAMES. YOU’VE EARNED THEM”.

This was a real and direct message from Sebastian. It was clear that by reliving the accident, something wonderful had happened. But then again, what can someone say about miracles. And what is true or what is virtually true—no one can say with finality. The narrator had undergone an experience that had proved to be virtually true.

सारांश

कथावाचक एक किशोर है, जो एक ट्रेन में सफ़र कर रहा है। उसका ध्यान एक लम्बी-चौड़ी महिला की ओर आकर्षित होता है, जो उसके सामने बैठी समाचारपत्र पढ़ रही है। अखबार की सुर्खियाँ एक चौदह वर्षीय लड़के, स्वैसचियन शुल्ट्ज के बारे में हैं। यह लड़का कोमा से बाहर आ गया जबकि उसके डॉक्टरों को इसकी कोई आशा नहीं थी। समाचारपत्र ने यह भी बताया था कि स्वैसचियन एक मोटर दुर्घटना का शिकार था और होश में अभी तक नहीं आया था। उसकी माँ को आशा थी कि वह होश में आ जायेगा पर एक चमत्कार ही उसे बचा सकता था। कथावाचक स्वैसचियन की तस्वीर देखकर स्तम्भित रह जाता है, क्योंकि वह उसको जानने लग गया था। पर, अखबार का कहना था कि वह तो लगातार कोमा (प्रगाढ़ बेहोशी) में था। कथावाचक अत्यन्त उत्तेजित और चक्कर में था। उसको समझ ही नहीं आ रहा था कि ऐसा कैसे हो सकता है।

यह सब एक मास पहले शुरू हुआ जब उसने अपने पिता के साथ जाकर सबसे आधुनिक एक मनोवैज्ञानिक कम्प्यूटर गेम, लगभग

सच ही वाली, मुँह की हेलमेट और दस्तानों के साथ खरीदी। इसमें कुछ खेल तो पुराने थे, पर कथावाचक को कोई अफसोस नहीं हुआ। वह सबसे आधुनिक तकनीक वाला खेल खेलने के लिए अति उत्सुक था।

पहला खेल जो उसने शुरू किया उसका नाम 'वाइल्ड वेस्ट' था। यह खेल खेलते हुए उसे लगा कि वह भी खेल का एक पात्र है और शेरिफ का बैज उसकी कमीज़ पर लगा हुआ है। जैसे ही वह सैलून के घूमते हुए द्वार से अन्दर घुसा उसने सबको उसे क्रोधित दृष्टि से देखते हुए पाया। उसने एक गिलास में लाल रंग का पेय पिया और एक ज़ोर की धमाके की आवाज़ सुनकर तुरंत पलटा। द्वार पर काली आँखों वाला जेड खड़ा था और उसके हाथ में सबसे शीघ्र चलने वाली बन्दूक थी। उसने कथावाचक, जो शेरिफ डोब्सन था, से बाहर आने को कहा। कथावाचक ने गिलास पटक़ा और बाहर गया। इस समय खेल ने एक आश्चर्यजनक अप्रत्याशित मोड़ ले लिया।

एक दूसरा शेरिफ, पिछले द्वार से चिल्लाता हुआ और हाथ हिलाते हुए निकला। कथावाचक को समझ नहीं आया कि खेल किस ओर जा रहा है। दूसरे शेरिफ ने कथावाचक को बाहर जाने से मना किया। कथावाचक ने ध्यान से देखा कि दूसरा शेरिफ दूसरी कम्प्यूटर छवियों से भिन्न था। वह कथावाचक के समान एक किशोर बालक था और दूसरी छवियों के समान नहीं चल रहा था। उसने कथावाचक को अपने पीछे आने को कहा। वह एक गलियारे से तेज़ी से भागते हुए एक दूसरे द्वार द्वारा, और फिर एक द्वार से निकल कर वापस सैलून में जा पहुँचे। दूसरा शेरिफ एक खिड़की से कूद गया और कथावाचक भी उसके पीछे कूदा। शेरिफ एक घोड़े पर सवार था और कथावाचक उसके पीछे बैठ गया। वहाँ और दूसरे घुड़सवार भी थे जो उनका पीछा कर रहे थे। एक बन्दूक की आवाज़ ने कथावाचक को चौंका दिया और उसे पता चला कि दूसरा शेरिफ गिर पड़ा है। उसी वक्त चमकती हुई रोशनी हुई और "खेल खतम" लिखा हुआ आया। जैसे ही कथावाचक ने अपना हेलमेट उतारा, उसने ट्रे में एक कागज़ का पन्ना देखा।

उसमें दूसरे शेरिफ की तसवीर के साथ एक संदेश था "मैं फँस गया हूँ, मुझे निकालने में सहायता करो, ड्रैगन क्वैल्ट खेल खेलो।" – स्वैसचियन शुल्टज़। दूसरे दिन सुबह, कथावाचक ने "Dragon Quest" खेल शुरू किया। उस खेल का लक्ष्य, एक सुनहरे बालों वाली राजकुमारी औरोरा को एक दुष्ट ड्रैगन से बचाना था, और उस ड्रैगन का खजाना भी लूटना था। कथावाचक राजकुमारी को बचाने ही वाला था, तभी स्वैसचियन की आवाज़ ने उसे पीछे से रोका, और पहले उसे बचाने को कहा। स्वैसचियन इस समय दूसरा नाईट था, उसने राजकुमारी की सुनहरी चोटी को काटकर एक रस्सी बनाई और कूद गया। कथावाचक भी कूद गया। वे दोनों एक खुफिया मार्ग से भागने लगे और ड्रैगन उनका पीछा करने लगा। वे एक तहखाने में घुस गये और तभी ड्रैगन अचानक उनके सामने आ गया और उन पर कूदा। ड्रैगन केवल स्वैसचियन की ओर लपका क्योंकि वही उसका निशाना था। इससे पहले कि कथावाचक उसकी सहायता के लिए कुछ करता, खेल समाप्त हो गया।

इस बार संदेश में लिखा था। – "दूसरी बार ज़्यादा सफलता नहीं मिली तो मुझे हमेशा के लिए यहाँ रहना पड़ेगा। 'जेलब्रेक' खेल खेलो। शायद वह काम आये!"

कथावाचक को जेलब्रेक खेल के नियम पढ़ने की आवश्यकता नहीं थी। उसे मालूम था कि उसका लक्ष्य स्वैसचियन को बचाना है। उसके जेल का साथी कैदी नम्बर 02478 – शुल्टज़ था। एक कंकाल रूपी कार्ड की सहायता से, दोनों जेल की कोठरी से बाहर निकल आये परन्तु जेल के सायरन और कुत्ते उनका पीछा करने लगे। वे पहरेदारों से बचते हुए छत पर जा पहुँचे। जब स्वैसचियन हेलीकॉप्टर का इंतज़ार कर रहा था, तब पहरेदार और कुत्ते उनकी ओर लपकते हुए आ पहुँचे। इससे पहले कथावाचक कुछ करता, स्वैसचियन ने एक कदम पीछे की ओर लिया और वह छत से गिर कर नीचे सीमेंट पर जा गिरा। खेल वहीं खत्म हो गया और कथावाचक को बड़ा धक्का लगा जब उसने देखा कि इस बार स्वैसचियन का कोई संदेश नहीं था। कथावाचक ने सब खेलों को बार-बार खेला पर उसे फिर स्वैसचियन नहीं मिला। तब, एक दिन, एक संदेश उसने देखा—

"क्या हम एक आखिरी कोशिश करें? हेलिकॉप्टर की अच्छी योजना नहीं थी। एक दुर्घटना होनी आवश्यक है। वॉरज़ोन गेम खेलो। अगर यह असफल हो जाती है तो मैं तुम्हें फिर परेशान नहीं करूँगा। जय हो – सेब

कथावाचक ने वॉरज़ोन खेला। वह एक शहर में ऊँची इमारतों के सामने खड़ा था। सब तरफ़ मशीनगनों चल रही थीं, बम फूट रहे थे पर कथावाचक को यह मालूम था कि स्वैसचियन और स्वयं उसे हेलिकॉप्टर के पास सही सलामत पहुँचना था। वह दौड़कर अनधिकृत भूमि पर पहुँचे और एक इंतज़ार करती हुई जीप को चलाने लगे। स्वैसचियन ने एक दम ब्रेक दबाई और जीप पूरी घूम गई। कथावाचक कूद कर हेलीकॉप्टर में बैठ गया परन्तु स्वैसचियन जीप से नहीं निकल पाया और जीप जाकर एक टैंक से टकराई। स्वैसचियन जीप से उछलकर हेलिकॉप्टर के सामने धमाके के साथ गिर पड़ा। धूल उड़ने के कारण कथावाचक कुछ भी देख न पाया और खेल खत्म हो गया। जब उसने अपना हेलमेट हटया तो कथावाचक ने देखा कि उसने गेम जीत ली, और 40,000,000 अंक बनाये। कथावाचक सत्य की तह तक पहुँचना चाहता था। ट्रेन से उतर कर उसने नेट पर खोज की। उसे जो वह ढूँढ़ रहा था मिल गया। वास्तव में स्वैसचियन दुर्घटना के समय अपने कम्प्यूटर पर एक मनोवैज्ञानिक गेम खेल रहा था। जिस समय दुर्घटना घटी, कम्प्यूटर ने स्वैसचियन की स्मरणशक्ति को डिस्क में जमा कर लिया था। पर वह कथावाचक के कम्प्यूटर में कैसे आयी? यह समस्या भी तब हल हो गई, जब कथावाचक को पता चला कि अस्पताल से किसी ने स्वैसचियन के खेल चुरा लिये और उन्हें बेच दिया और कथावाचक ने चोरी की हुई गेम खरीदी। एक और संदेश स्वैसचियन को मिला –

"प्रिय माइकल, धन्यवाद! मुझे नहीं मालूम यह कैसे हुआ, परन्तु तुमने मेरी जान बचाई। हमें शीघ्र ही मिलना चाहिए, जय हो! सेब, तुम यह खेल अपने पास ही रखो, तुमने उन्हें मेहनत से कमाया है।"

यह एक सच्चा और सीधा संदेश स्वैसचियन से था। यह स्पष्ट है कि दुर्घटना को दुबारा से जीना एक अनोखा अद्भुत अनुभव था। कोई चमत्कारों के विषय में क्या कह सकता है? पर क्या सत्य है और लगभग सच क्या है कोई भी पूरे विश्वास से नहीं बता सकता है। कथावाचक एक ऐसे अनुभव से गुज़रा जो लगभग सच ही निकला।

WORD-MEANINGS

coma : prolonged deep unconsciousness • **miracle** : remarkable supernatural event • **fantastic** : imaginary, fanciful • **interactive** : act with each

other • **futuristic**: relating to future • **Sheriff** : chief law-enforcing officer • **slammed** : applied • **slumped** : to fall backwards • **massive** : huge • **knight** : honourable military rank • **battlements** : parapets with gaps at the top of the wall • **dungeons** : underground places • **wailed** : noisy sound • **howled**: barked • **tramping** : sound made by first steps • **dodging** : evaded • **pounded** : ran upwards • **vicious** : frightening • **furiously** : nervously • **raked** : filled

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS (SOLVED)

Answer the following questions briefly.

1. (a) *According to the newspaper, what had happened to Sebastian Shultz?*

Ans : Sebastian Shultz, a 14-year-old boy, was badly injured in a motorway accident. He had gone into coma and he was taking a lot of time to regain consciousness.

(b) *'Dad's nutty about computers.' What evidence is there to support this statement?*

Ans : The narrator's father was most crazy for computer for he bought a lot of such things at the Computer Fair. He bought a Pentium Processor, a Ram, 1.2 GB hard disk and 16 speed CD ROMs, with speakers, printer, modem and a scanner.

(c) *In what way did the second game seem very real?*

Ans : The second game was more thrilling called DRAGON QUEST. The narrator felt that he was really walking in the Dragon's castle where they were being pursued by the dragon, the narrator felt it was like a real chase and even felt the dragon's hot breath on his face.

(d) *What was Michael's theory about how Sebastian had entered the games?*

Ans : Michael believed that Sebastian had been plugged into the computer when he banged his head in the accident, the computer had saved his memory in its own. These games were stolen from the hospital and Michael had purchased them in the Computer Fair.

(e) *Why did the news of the 'miracle recovery' shock Michael?*

Ans : Michael was surprised to read in the newspaper that Sebastian Shultz had awakened from a coma that the doctors had feared might last forever. He was shocked to

see Sebastian's photo also. If Sebastian had been in coma throughout, then how was it possible for him to play computer games with Michael?

(f) *Michael's meeting with Sebastian had been a chance meeting. Where had it taken place and how?*

Ans : Michael was playing a game called Wildwest, and he was playing the Sheriff. There was an altercation with Black-eyed Jed and he was going to meet him out of the saloon. Before he could go, he saw another Sheriff, very different from the other computer images. Later he discovered it had been Sebastian Shultz.

(g) *What kind of computers fascinated Michael and his dad? Why?*

Ans : Both Michael and his father were obsessed about the latest type of computers, complete with speakers and everything. They liked the latest gizmos that came in the market, specially the latest interactive psycho-drive games.

(h) *Describe the first place where Michael was virtually transported?*

Ans : While playing Wildwest, Michael felt that he was not standing in the powerbase but was transported down the dusty track to the centre of town. A Sheriff's badge was pinned to his shirt and he entered a saloon where everyone glared at the narrator. There he had a fizzy drink and he was challenged by Black-Eyed Jed, the fastest gun in the world.

(i) *What help did Sebastian Shultz ask Michael for? How did he convey the message?*

Ans : Sebastian Shultz had sent a message through

the printer saying that he is stuck and Michael should try to retrieve him. And that could be done through the game DRAGON QUEST.

(j) *Why did Michael fail in rescuing Sebastian Shultz for the first time?*

Ans : Michael had followed Sebastian through the chase and they ended up in the saloon. Then Sebastian dived out and both were sitting on the horseback, chased by men on horseback. Sebastian told Michael to keep his head down but he himself was shot by a bullet and slumped back near him. Before Michael could do anything the game got over.

(k) *The second attempt to rescue Sebastian Shultz too was disastrous. Why?*

Ans : The second time Michael was playing DRAGON QUEST and both he and Sebastian were knights trying to save a princess from the dragon's castle. They both had barely got away when they were chased by the dragon himself. They passed secret passages, dungeons but

the dragon obstructed their path and attacked Sebastian. Michael swung his sword but Sebastian was the target of the dragon's fury, so before he could mediate further, the game was over.

(l) *Narrate the incident that injured Sebastian.*

Ans : It happened in WARZONE, where both Sebastian and Michael were trying to escape a city which was exploding with machine-guns and bombs. They jumped into a jeep and Michael managed to get into a helicopter but Sebastian couldn't get out of the jeep. The jeep had clashed with a tank and Sebastian landed on the ground injured.

(m) *How was Sebastian Shultz's memory stored on Michael's disk? How did Michael discover it?*

Ans : When Sebastian had met with an accident, the computer had saved his memory as its own. Michael discovered later that the games disk had got stolen in the hospital and he had ended up buying those computer games.

OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Michael cannot get over this miracle and his involvement in saving Sebastian's life. The playing of games and effort to help Sebastian has taken a toll on his health and emotions. After a gap of time, Michael writes a letter to his friend, reliving this experience.

Ans : 42, Chelmsford Street
Chennai
10, July, 20 XX
Dear Peter,

I wanted to write earlier but was not in a state of mind to relate a miracle that took place in my life. We have read often of imaginary experiences that obliterate or penetrate reality but you will be surprised to know that I had also got involved in it. Get ready for some shockers! You are also a wizkid at computer games, so brother get ready for some explosive action! Put-on your visor!

One day, while travelling in the train, I read about a 14-year-old boy, Sebastian Shultz, who had been injured in an accident and gone into coma. After looking at the picture, the earth beneath me started shaking. Now hear it out. Sometime back I was playing WILDWEST, donning a Sheriff's badge and getting ready for some gala action with Black-Eyed Jed when another Sheriff entered, looking strangely different and changed the course of the game. He was shot down during a chase in the end. Then the game got over and I was surprised to see a message by

Sebastian that he's stuck and to retrieve him, I must try Dragonquest. In this game also he became the second knight with me and was again attacked by the Dragon. Again a personal message by Sebastian was a frantic call for help, telling me not to give up and try JAILBREAK. I tried again but Sebastian again fell down. I had constantly failed him again and again and felt very depressed. The last call again gave me hope. This time Sebastian suggested that I must try WARZONE and there had to be some kind of accident. A similar thing happened in the game and Sebastian met with an accident. The game had got over and I had scored 40,000,000. Lo! Can you believe it! I had cracked the game. Later I discovered that Sebastian had recovered.

I vowed to solve this mystery. Peter you'd never believe that such things can happen. When Sebastian had an accident he had been plugged into the computer and the computer saved his memory as its own. These games were stored on the disk and got stolen. I bought those games at the Computer Fair. Imagine two boys, so far, came so near, in an unspeakable bond. And to your friend goes the credit of saving Sebastian, though not consciously. Is it reality? Was that a miracle, a fantasy? I don't know but it happened to me.

Do write your reaction.
Your friend
Michael

REFERENCE TO CONTEXT – MCQs

Read the following extract and write the correct option.

1. *“It couldn’t be Sebastian Shultz I’d met. I leant forward to read the rest of the article.”*

- (i) Michel said the because
- (a) the Michael had met a different Sebastian.
 - (b) it was a case of mistaken identity.
 - (c) it was the same Sebastian who had played games with him.
 - (d) the author could not believe that it was the same Sebastian, since the real one had been in coma.

2. *“The second Sheriff groaned and slumped back against me”.*

- (ii) The narrator was shocked because
- (a) The second Sheriff died
 - (b) The second Sheriff fainted
 - (c) The second Sheriff fell down from the horse
 - (d) The game got over so it could not be ascertained what had happened to him

3. *“The aim of the game was simple. I had to rescue the fair princess Aurora from the wicked dragon.”*

- (iii) The game was simple because
- (a) Michael had played it before
 - (b) Michael already had read the instructions
 - (c) Sebastian was the one who had given him all the clues
 - (d) Michael was well prepared for he knew the real objective of the game

4. *BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME. PLEASE DON'T GIVE UP, MICHAEL, OTHERWISE I'LL HAVE TO STAY IN HERE FOREVER.*

(iv) This means that

- (a) Sebastian would have to remain in hospital
- (b) Sebastian will only remain a computer image
- (c) Sebastian would remain in a coma only
- (d) Sebastian will never learn to play computer games

5. *“I felt really bad. I’d failed Sebastian, I’d failed the game.”*

- (v) Michael felt bad because
- (a) Michael had blundered in forgetting some key factors while playing the game
 - (b) Michael had failed Sebastian as he had made half hearted efforts
 - (c) The game used to get over before Michael could help Sebastian
 - (d) Michael didn’t know that Sebastian was a real boy, that time

6. *“I found what I was looking for quickly enough. Apparently, at the time of the accident, Sebastian was using his lap-top to one of the psycho-drive games that I’ve got.”*

- (vi) Michael could help Sebastian because
- (a) Sebastian had stolen Michael’s games
 - (b) Sebastian could play any psycho-drive game from far with remote control.
 - (c) Sebastian was playing those games and later they were bought by Michael at a Computer Fair.
 - (d) Sebastian was only a computer image so he could play games any time.

Answers : (i) (d) (ii) (c) (iii) (d)
(iv) (c) (v) (c) (vi) (c)

PARAGRAPH BASED NON-MCQs

Read the following extracts and answer the questions given thereafter.

1. *“The doctors were doing all they could, but in our hearts we knew we needed a miracle”.*

[C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

(a) **Who made the above remark?**

Ans : Mrs. Shultz, Sebastian’s mother, made the above remark.

(b) **Discuss the context of the remark?**

Ans : Sebastian had gone into a coma and he was not recovering.

(c) **What kind of miracle was required and for whom?**

Ans : Sebastian could only be cured by a miracle.

(d) **What was surprising about the miracle to Michael?**

Ans : Michael was surprised to see the photo because he knew Sebastian and was surprised to know about the accident.

2. *“With the help of the skeleton swipe-card we were soon out of the cell and racing down corridors.”*

(a) **Who are the participants and what is the game?**

Ans : This game was called JAILBREAK and it was played by Michael and Sebastian.

(b) **Why is Michael playing this game?**

Ans : Michael is playing this to rescue Sebastian.

(c) **Why had Sebastian urged Michael to play this game?**

Ans : In the earlier game Michael had not been successful in rescuing Sebastian so he had asked him to play this game.

(d) **Did Michael succeed in his efforts? Why/Why not?**

Ans : No, in this game also he had fallen down on the concrete, when dogs had charged towards them.

3. *“There’s got to be some kind of accident... go into WARZONE. If this doesn’t work I won’t bother you again.”*

(a) **Who has sent the above message and to whom?**

Ans : This frantic message was sent by Sebastian to Michael.

(b) **What is the objective behind this message?**

Ans : In every game Michael had failed to save Sebastian. So this was to be the last game.

(c) **What are the fears and apprehensions faced by the sender?**

Ans : If WARZONE does not work, then Sebastian would never trouble Michael again.

(d) **What kind of help does the sender seek? Why?**

Ans : There had to be some kind of accident only then he would be saved.

4. *“At least, that was what I thought then. Now I knew that Sebastian Shultz, the boy in the game, really did exist.”*

(a) **How did the speaker know that Sebastian Shultz existed?**

Ans : Michael had seen the proof in the newspaper by seeing Sebastian’s photo that he did exist.

(b) **What had been the source of his information?**

Ans : The article and Sebastian’s photo in the newspaper.

(c) **How did this information help the narrator in solving the mystery?**

Ans : Michael also checked the net and discovered that real Sebastian did exist.

(d) **Sebastian exists in the game and in real life?**

Ans : At the time of his accident, Sebastian was playing those psycho-drive games and the computer saved his memory as its own. When Michael played those games, Sebastian was at the other end.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. **How did Michael notice the story of Sebastian Shultz?**

Ans : Sitting in the train, Michael saw a big lady, reading a newspaper. There was a story with a title ‘Miracle Recovery’. It was written that Sebastian Shultz, a 14-year-old boy from London, had been badly injured in a motor accident and had gone into a coma. His mother hoped that one day her son would be well and only a miracle could save him.

2. **While playing Wildwest, Michael found himself in a particular role. What was it and how did he behave in the game?**

Ans : To his surprise, Michael was playing the role of a Sheriff and he burst into a saloon. Everyone was surprised by his entry. He had some fizzy kind of drink when a black-eyed Jed, the fastest gun, called him out of the saloon. As he was going, a second Sheriff appeared and he did not look like other characters. His movement was also not like a computer image. His entry made the game more complicated.

3. **Who was Black-Eyed Jed and what did he convey to the Sheriff?**

Ans : Michael was the Sheriff in the game ‘WILDWEST’. When he was enjoying a drink in the saloon, he was challenged by a Black-eyed Jed the fastest gun in the west. He wanted to confront the Sheriff. So he was called out of the saloon.

4. **What was the objective of the second game called Dragon quest? In what role did Sebastian appear in it?**

Ans : The aim of the game DRAGON QUEST was simple. It was to rescue fair princess Aurora from the wicked dragon and to collect the wicked dragon’s treasure. Sebastian appeared in the form of a knight and even Michael was also supposed to be a knight.

5. **How did the two knights try to escape from the castle of the dragon? Were they successful?**

Ans : Both the knights were chased by the wicked dragon. They ran across the battlements down a spiral

staircase and through a secret passage on the other side of the tapestry. The dragon was near them and they could feel his fiery breath. Both of them, then decided to try going through the dungeons which was their only hope.

6. Point out the desperation in Sebastian's message to Michael. What did he tell Michael to do?

Ans : When Michael was unable to save Sebastian in the earlier two games, Sebastian's message becomes desperate. He earnestly requests Michael not to give up, otherwise he would remain stuck up wherever he was. So he wishes him luck and tells him to try the game 'JAILBREAK'.

7. How did Michael and Sebastian escape from Jail in Jailbreak? Why was Sebastian injured in this escape?

Ans : Sebastian was Michael's cell-mate in the game 'JAILBREAK'. They use a skeleton swipe card to open the cell-door and run away. Sirens wail, guards run after them, fiery dogs howl and chase them. Both of them run upstairs but they are chased. Before Michael can do something, Sebastian falls down on the concrete below.

8. How did Michael connect Sebastian's recovery from coma with the result of his last game?

Ans : Apparently, at the time of an accident, Sebastian was using his laptop to play one of the psycho-drive games. He had been plugged into the computer and when he banged his head, the computer saved his memory as its own. Those

games were stolen when Sebastian was in the hospital. These games were sold in the market and Michael bought them from a Computer Fair.

9. What were the contents of Sebastian's last message? Why did Sebastian thank Michael?

Ans : The last message was full of heart felt emotions. Sebastian thanked Michael for saving his life and working so hard in every game to rescue him. Sebastian extends an invitation to meet him and wishes him well. He also tells Michael to keep these psycho-drive games as he deserves to keep them.

10. Who was Sebastian Shultz? How did he meet with an accident? [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : Sebastian Shultz was a fourteen years old from London. He met with an accident in a motorway and had gone into a coma. At the time of accident Sebastian was playing psycho-drive games.

11. In the second game 'Dragon Quest' Michael came to rescue Princess Aurora? Who cried out that he needed rescuing first and why?

Ans : In the second game, Dragon Quest, Michael was supposed to rescue Princess Aurora from the wicked dragon and also to collect dragon's treasure on the way. He was on the verge of saving the princess, when he heard a voice asking to be saved first. It was Sebastian who was in the form of second knight.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Sebastian Shultz writes his diary on his miraculous escape from going into oblivion—as doctors call it coma. Write this for him.

Ans : Dear Diary,

Sometimes life takes a strange turn and things that you had heard or read about become true. Virtual lives and realities take concrete shape. I just remember that I was crazy for those psycho-drive games and loved playing WARZONE, DRAGON QUEST etc. My last memory is when my head banged in the accident. After that I have no memory but a very distinct feeling of playing some games. I have read my report in the newspaper, how I had gone into a coma. It can only be called a miracle that I was playing games with another boy called Michael, which I discovered later strange! So very strange.

Sebastian.

2. Write a brief character sketch of Michael, giving his outstanding qualities that led him to save Sebastian's life.

Ans : Michael was of Sebastian's age and he loved adventure, war, pursuits, fights, confrontation and violent

games. Like other children of his age he was a computer freak and was really fascinated by psycho-drive games that make one forget the reality and one plays character like a Sheriff, a prisoner, knight etc. Michael is also very kind-hearted and tried his best to rescue Sebastian. He was intelligent enough to understand the objective of each game. By strange luck he got connected to Sebastian, whom he had never seen but proved his perseverance and determination in rescuing him from his coma. Michael is a young child but mature beyond his years.

3. Sebastian sends an e-mail to Michael on his recovery thanking him for all that he had done. Complete it for him.

Ans : Date : 15 Sept, 2010

From : sebastian@hotmail.com

To : michael@gmail.com

Subject : Thank you note

Dear Michael,

I cannot thank you enough for being the miracle

to save my life. Your perseverance, tenacity and determination prove that you are extraordinary. No wonder you saved my life and now I have fully recovered from my coma. I hope to meet you soon.

Lots of love.
Sebastian

4. How did Sebastian’s memory stored on disk end up on Michael’s Computer? How had Sebastian Shultz enter the game? [C.B.S.E. 2012 (T-2)]

Ans : Sebastian Sultz, a 14 years old boy from London, met with an accident and went into a coma and the doctors feared that his coma would last forever. Apparently, at the

time of accident, Sebastian was using his laptop to play one of the psycho drive games. He had been plugged into the computer, and when he banged his head, the computer saved his memory as its own. Those games were stolen when Sebastian was in the hospital.

After these games were sold in the market, Michael, who was a computer freak and was really fascinated by psycho-drive games, bought them from a computer fair.

Michael was intelligent enough to understand the objective of each game. By strange luck he got connected to Sebastian, whom he had never seen but proved his perservance and determination in rescuing him from his coma.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Generation Netsters

Virtual lives is their real world

Children are often happier with their online lives than they are with reality, a survey has revealed. They say they can be exactly who they want to be – and as soon as something is no longer fun they can simply hit the quit button. Researchers for children’s charity Kidscape assessed the online activities of 2,300 11- to 18-years-olds from across the UK and found that 45 per cent said they were sometimes happier online than in their real lives.

The report – Virtual Lives : It is more than a game, it is your life – lays bare the attitudes of children today to the internet and includes revealing insights into how they feel when they are on the web.

One researcher told “It’s easier to be who you want to be, because nobody knows you and if you don’t like the situation you can just exit and it is over.”

Another said : “You can say anything online. You can talk to people that you don’t normally speak to and you can edit your pictures so you look better. It is as if you are a completely different person.” Psychotherapist Peter Bradley, who is also deputy director of Kidscape, said that the desire for so many to adopt a different identity online was a cause for concern because the children were being divorced from reality. He added : ‘These findings suggest that children see cyberspace as detachable from the real world and a place where they explore parts of their behaviour and personality that they possibly would not show in real life. We can’t allow cyberworlds to be happier places than our real communities, otherwise we are creating a generation of young people not functioning adequately in our society.’

SURVEY REPORT : *One in eight young people is in contact with strangers when on the web and often lies about their appearance, age and background.*

Around 47 per cent of children said they behaved differently online than they did in their normal lives.

Around 10 per cent said they changed aspects of their appearance and their personality for their online activity.



1. Read the article given above and answer the questions that follow.

- (a) Why are children happier working online?
- (b) What freedom does Internet offer to children?
- (c) How can children appear to be completely different on Internet?

(d) How can Internet lead to malfunctioning in youngsters?

(e) List out the disadvantages of leading virtual lives.

2. Describe your favourite computer game in detail.

- | Compare it with the choice of your friends.
- | Discuss.