

BHOLI

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Learning objective

- To sensitise the students to the importance of education.
- To explain the importance of emotional security and family support for children.
- To indicate the need of love, encouragement and education for the disabled to fight against their odds.
- To make students aware that dowry is a social abuse.

This story is about a girl who is ugly and who stammers. As she is different from her siblings, she does not get proper care in her family. Her father sends her to a school because of a command from the tehsildar. The teacher in the school becomes the true mentor of Bholi and helps her gain some confidence. Time flies and with that Bholi becomes a young woman who is educated; unlike her sisters. Because of her ugly looks and pockmarked face, her father agrees to marry her off to a person who is double her age. Bholi agrees with her parents' decision. But when the bridegroom arrives he demands a hefty dowry to marry her. Her father somehow manages that money. Bholi is aghast at this development and decides to rebel against all. She decides to spend rest of her life to serve her parents and to teach in the school. an extremely touchy story with a sensational ending. The character ' Bholi' symbolizes simplicity , innocence yet at the end of the story, she symbolizes boldness too.





The story is all about a simple village girl named Bholi. Her real name was Sulekha. But fate deceived her and when she was ten months old, she fell off the cot damaging some part of her brain. As a result, she could pick up speech only after she was five years old, but she stammered. When she was two years old, she had an attack of small pox that left her with blank spots all over the body. The other children often made fun of her and mimicked her. Therefore, she talked very little.



Ramlal had seven children in all – three sons and four daughters. Bholi was the youngest. All others were healthy and strong except Bholi. Bholi was seven years old when a primary school opened in their village. The tehsildar came to perform the opening ceremony of the school. He told Ramlal that as a revenue official and as a representative of the government in the village, he should send his daughter to the school and set an example before the villagers. When he consulted his wife about the issue, his wife did not agree with him. Yet she decided to send Bholi to the school.



The next day, Bholi was given a bath, and a new dress to wear. Her mother matted his hair and then she was sent to the school. When her father left her in the school, she sat in a corner in the class. When her teacher asked her name, she stammered and the children started laughing. At this Bholi started weeping. But the teacher's voice was soft and soothing. She encouraged her a lot and finally Bholi could tell her full name. Then the teacher told her that if she would come daily to school, she would speak without a stammer and one day she would become the most educated girl in the village and no one will dare to laugh at her. Then they will listen her carefully.



Years passed and the village turned into a small town. One night Ramlal consulted his wife about the proposal made by Bishamber, a grocer in the neighbouring village. His wife readily agreed to it. Bholi was also listening to the conversation. The day of her marriage came. When the bridegroom was about to garland her, some lady pulled her veil down showing her face to him. The bridegroom had a quick glance at her face and noticed marks on her face. At this, he asked Ramlal to give him five thousand rupees as dowry in order to marry that ugly girl. After some arguments, Ramlal handed over the money to Bishambar. But Bholi asked his father to take money back from him as she did not want to marry that old lame and greedy person. Everybody was surprised because Bholi was not stammering at all. The bridegroom went back with his baraat. Bholi decided that she would serve her parents in their old age and teach in the same school where she had learnt so much.



Thus we observe that:

Bholi's teacher played an important role in changing the course of her life. She was kind and spoke to her in a soft and soothing voice and patted her affectionately and this touched her heart .She kept encouraging her every time , was affectionate towards her and told Bholi to put her fears of not being able to speak aside.

The teacher's encouragement and motivation was responsible for transforming her into a wise, confident, fearless person who could read, write and speak clearly.